

SCIENCE FANTASY IN TV, CINEMA AND GRAPHICS

№20 60p

# STARBURST

SPECIAL ISSUE!

**PIN-UP**

FEATURE ON THOSE

**BLAKE'S 7**

SPECIAL EFFECTS

WALT DISNEY'S

**20,000**

**LEAGUES**

**UNDER**

**THE SEA**

**STAR TREK v**

**BLACK HOLE**

SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

MARVEL'S SUPERHERO

**THE THING**

IN HIS OWN TV SERIES

THE CLASSIC SF TV SHOW

**OUTER LIMITS**

**FANTASY FEMALES**





## FABULOUS FANTASY FEMALES

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TWENTY SIX YEARS BEFORE THE BLACK HOLE DISNEY RELEASED A MOVIE BASED ON JULES VERNE'S CLASSIC, 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. DON'T MISS OUR FEATURE STARTING ON PAGE 12.



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# STARBURST

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A Marvel Comics Production.

# STARBURST LETTERS

## GREMLINS

A few gremlins crept into my interview with Tom Baker in *Starburst 19* and, unfortunately, one misprint is not immediately obvious.

When I talked to him, he made an interesting point about "the lovely alchemy of being an actor. You turn this difficult stage direction into some kind of dramatic gold which it doesn't actually inherently contain".

Somewhere along the way, the alchemy of printing turned "gold" into "goal" and poor Tom ended up quoted as saying something completely different to what he said.

I thought I'd better take this chance to set the record straight.

Talking of records, it's good to see Mat Irvine writing for *Starburst*. I look forward to his review of *Boris the Spider*.

John Fleming,  
London.

## STAR TREK THE MOTION PICTURE

I am just writing to say that I recently went to see *Star Trek - The Motion Picture*. It was an absolutely fantastic film. The storyline and script were excellent, as was the acting. The special effects were stunning, but did not detract from the characterisations which have been well-maintained from the tv series. The story had a superb twist at the end and I especially like the use of the original *Star Trek* theme as incidental music, although the new music was also wonderful.

This is the best film I have seen for many years and to any one who has not seen it I would say this film is brilliant - don't miss it!

Leanne Prescott,  
Liverpool,  
Merseyside.

## BRING BACK THE AVENGERS!

At last! A fantasy magazine piece has pleased me sufficiently to make me express my pleasure in writing. I'm talking about your articles on *The Avengers* (*Starburst 13 & 14*).

I must confess that I was both pleased and surprised to see them since I have long thought that one of the best series ever produced by television had been completely forgotten.

The in-depth look at certain episodes brought back fond memories, and also brought to mind other episodes with a strong fantasy content. *Who's Who?* in which the minds of Steed and Emma are transferred into the heads of a couple of villains and vice-versa. *A Touch of Brimstone*: a very Gothic affair containing, as I remember, some controversial scenes of Diane Rigg in a black corset and spiked collar. *Escape in Time*: and the *Superlative Seven* which was set on an eerie island in the best 1940s B picture tradition.

Even seen now (*Return of the Cybernauts*, *From Venus With Love* and *The Living Dead* are available on 8mm) Macnee and Rigg's *Avengers* still contain all their original appeal. The plots are just as believably implausible, the characters are just as solid and the dialogue just as witty.

I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Hollis' sentiments - that the time is more than right to entertain a new generation with *The Avengers*.

Of the *Avengers* merchandise, don't forget the set of Steed's Bentley and Mrs Peel's Lotus Elan by Corgi or the mass-produced Steed's Sword-Stick. Also Gold Key did a few *Avengers* comics with grotesque artwork.

As a kind of follow up, it would be nice to see some sort of episode guide - any chance?

Malcolm Liddle,  
Mopferly Park,  
Nottingham.



So, you remember *A Touch of Brimstone*, too, Malcolm. Well if you turn to page 28 you will find a colour photo of Diane Rigg from that very episode. But for those of you who can't wait here's a preview...



# AWFUL ALIENS!

## VOICES

I was very pleased to see in *Starburst* 18, the extensive interviews and photographs from the forthcoming *Blake's 7* series. However, on reading the section on Peter Tuddenham, who provides the voices of Zen and Orec, I noticed that he says that this is his first venture into science fiction. However, as I am also a devoted fan of the Doctor Who series (keep up the good work with the weekly by the way), I feel that it should be mentioned that Peter provided some voices for the 1975 Doctor Who adventure *The Ark in Space*. In this story he was the voice of both the computer that warned the Doctor and Harry not to enter the "sterile area" of the space beacon, and of the system that calmed the instructed Sarah prior to her being frozen to join the other cryogenically stored humans on the Ark.

He also provided the voice of the Mandragora intelligence when it spoke to Hieronymous the priest in the 1976 adventure *The Masque of Mandragora*.

I would certainly class these as being science fiction. Anyhow, despite this, *Starburst* continues to be one of my favourite sci-fi magazines, although I do wish you'd feature more material on horror films (mostly new ones) rather than reviews and massive articles on crummy sci-fi films like *Star Trek - The Motion Picture* and *Meteor*.

David J. Howe,  
Surbiton,  
Surrey.

## BLAKE'S 7

I have just "discovered" *Starburst* having recently moved from a remote (and thoroughly uncivilised!) part of the country where your super magazine has never seen light of day.

You ask in your leader for comments on the rumour that



I very much enjoyed *Starburst* 18 - a great mag but I notice you didn't tell us about your sneaky 10p price rise.

Your interview with Sandy Howard on *Meteor* was interesting, but now we know all the exact details behind the much publicised delays on the film - no more, please.

The Dawn of the Dead review was useful and informative, as were the reviews of *A Boy and his Dog* and the perceptive, excellent review of Project UFO.

*Things to Come* was excellent as ever: is there any news on the Scorchman Doctor Who film?

*We're sorry about the suddenness of the price rise, David, but it was such a fast-minute necessity we could not give advance warning. Sorry you didn't like the Aliens Portfolio. It seemed quite popular with our other readers. And here, especially for Steve Kelly of London and Dick Large of Essex we present an exclusive still of it: The Terror from Beyond Space.*

*Blake's 7* is to finish with the current series. Well, having already admitted to a strong bias, I feel that the first two episodes of this series featuring Avon showed a possible new direction it could take in the future: putting the main characters individually into different situations but keeping them basically in touch with each other. Steven Pacey and Josette Simon have hardly had time to establish themselves yet, but there is no reason to suppose that Tarrant and Dayna will not become sufficiently strong characters to stand alone in this way just as Cally, Vila and Avon already can. However, bias apart, I think there is little doubt that the complex and compelling character of Avon as portrayed by

The *Blake's 7* interviews were good, though you've left them a little bit late now that *Blake*, *Jenna* and *Travis* have left the series. Please keep track of David Maloney and his *Day of the Triffids* project.

The *Aliens Portfolio* was pretty awful. If you must do this kind of thing you could at least print stills from decent films or tv series - especially tv aliens.

The report on Season 79 was interesting. Could you please do more on it and any other conventions held in Britain.

The *Starburst Profile* on George Pal and his films was a nice article, but don't go overboard with lots of articles on all the old "classic" sci-fi films as it gets a bit monotonous reading the same old praising articles again and again in different mags.

Finally, *Book World* was a little short, but I like the idea of reviewing other magazines as well as books.

I look forward to *Starburst* 19 with news on *Season 3* and the *Doctor Who* interviews.

David McGarva,  
Eckington,  
Worcs.

Paul Darrow must remain central to the series. It would certainly seem a pity not to give him the opportunity to develop fully, especially as Paul has said that, by virtue of the character's complexity, there is still a great deal he can do with Avon. It would seem to me that the limiting factor on *Blake's 7* should be Paul's willingness to continue surprising us with new quirks of Avon's make-up and the resulting interaction with the other characters. By the way, I think it would be a mistake for the producers to have Avon too involved romantically. Apart from making half the programme's female viewers very jealous (!) it would spoil the enigma of the 'men alone' which was previously so successfully

established by Leonard Nimoy as Mr Spock and which plays a large part in the fascination of such characters.

Janette Cook,  
Hockley,  
Essex.

## NO PICTURES

I buy your magazine ostensibly for my daughter aged 14. In reality, I read it myself from cover to cover. I enjoy it very much, especially the interviews and the colour pictures.

Now I hope you can help me. I am a *Blake's 7* fan, and especially of Paul Darrow, so I was delighted to read your excellent article on the programme. I was particularly pleased to see your magazine had personally interviewed the actors instead of copying the quotes from other magazine interviews. The pictures were excellent the best I have seen and this brings me to my question. Is it possible to buy these pictures? I don't want to cut the magazine as I have all the issues and want to keep them intact.

Please continue your excellent standards and - please - more of *Blake's 7*.

Anne Barrett,  
Carlisle,  
Cumbria.

*We often get requests from readers asking about the photographs we print. Unfortunately it is not possible for private individuals to obtain such material as it is supplied exclusively by the film and tv production companies for publicity purposes.*

*There is an answer though, Anne. Why don't you buy two copies of Starburst? One to keep and One to cut up! What a terrific idea!*

Send all comments to:  
*Starburst Letters*,  
Marvel Comics Ltd,  
205-211 Kentish Town Road,  
London, NW5.

# THINGS TO COME

The latest news and happenings in the worlds of cinema and television science fantasy  
compiled by Tony Crawley.

## GALACTICA II

Glen Larson's *Battlestar Galactica* has won a tele-remake in America. When the show was exed, it was the most expensive hour in the business — 750,000 dollars a go. Since when Glen had himself a big hit with *Buck Rogers*, et exactly the same price. And so, it seems, the ABC Network have thought again. They have now ordered a new-style pilot film — three hours' worth of radical re-vamping. Apart from Lorne Greene, the whole cast has been sacked, et least they're not being re-hired. The new format, *Galactica 1980*, will be given "an information thrust" which sounds painful but apparently means less hardware and a greater concentration on time-travelling. Or *Who American style*, perhaps.

## WESTWORLD II TOO

Racing ahead of ABC-TV, however, the CBS network has already opened its new sf series from MGM — home of the late, lamented (by some) *Logan's Run*. The new show is *Beyond Westworld*, an extension of Michael Crichton's neat movie of 1973. Produced by Lou Shaw, the series was rushed on to CBS screens to fill the slot emptied by the rapidly-cancelled extension of the old *Maverick* series... *Young Maverick*.

## SUPERMAN II

... will be super-late. That's for certain. But I must have warned you about that before now... The Selkinds are expected to hand over their finished print to Warner Brothers (who've decided they want to release it after all) by June 30. That's when the Warner studio head wanted it on release throughout America, and here as well. Not any more... The delay is simple enough to explain. Fer more new footage had to be shot by "co-ordinator not director" Richard Lester than anyone first realised... or indeed had owned up to. Last time I was on the Pinewood Super-set, Chris Reeve was about to save the world as we know it from the observation platform at the top of the Eiffel Tower. And that, according to the clepperboard, was Scene 488, Take 3...

However, from what special-effects man Colin Chilvers tells me, I'm wrong about one thing. The new movie won't be any half-hearted, cheapjack *Superman 1½* but "more like *Superman 2½*". Says Colin, "I think the company is committed to make *Superman 2½*. They've bought the rights for 25 years and I can't see it's in their interest to make a quick rip-off sequel. If they did that, they'd lose the

market for the rest of the time... and they're due to start *Superman III* in December."

(There will be more on my meeting with the magical Colin Chilvers in an upcoming issue, stay tuned).



## STAR OF THE YEAR

Well, of the year so far then... Peter Jones. Peter who, do I hear you cry? How dare you! This is the face of the voice of the book in radio's greatest achievement since *Journey into Space* all too many light-years ago: *The Hitch-hiker's Guide To The Galaxy*. When it came back on Radio 4 in January, for just a daily trek of five episodes, I missed it. But the repeats will be happening before you know it (that's the trouble). Next, or so we hear, a TV series (goodbye Blake, we need you no more) end maybe a movie. Wonderful!

## BLATTY II

No doubt about it, the brothers Warner win them all over in the end. The studio said — or one of their spokesmen said it to me, anyway — that they didn't want *Superman II*. But they've got it; (and little wonder, since the movie topped last year's box-office takes in most countries of the world). Now, Warner have picked up something called *The Ninth Configuration*, as well. And that's even more staggering. This is the first film to be written, produced and directed by William Peter Blatty since suing

Werners for 11-million dollars for alleged breach of contract concerning his most famous work, *The Exorcist*. Blatty made *Configuration* — with Exorcist star Jason Miller, Stacy Keach and others as military officers in a government asylum — in Hungary, with a lot of his own money and Pepsi Cole funds which were blocked inside Hungary. He stayed far from Werners every step of the way... until now.

How can he explain his amazing turnaround? "these two things have to stay separate," says he. He's merely alleging fraud and deceit over Exorcist figures at the box-office, that's all. If he feels Werners are not to be trusted, what's he doing throwing his new film at their releasing mercies? If he feels Werners are to be trusted, what's he doing suing them? Funny old place Hollywood.

## CARPENTER'S ACT

There's plenty of surprises, good and bad, among the shocks and mayhem of John Carpenter's highly successful new creeper: *The Fog*. There is Mrs Carpenter's movie debut for starters; and Adrienne Barbeau is great as the script's pivotal disc-jockey lady. Charles Cyphers is cast tongue-in-cheek in the role of a guy called Dan O'Bannon (John's partner on *Dark Star*, of course). The bad news is that Jamie Lee Curtis is thoroughly wasted in a role as slim as that played by her mum, Janet Leigh. Biggest surprise of all is that the fellow playing a church's maintenance man is none other than John Carpenter himself. This Hitchcock thing is getting to him, except he stays on screen much longer than Hitch ever did.

## FRANK'S BACK I

Are you ready for Frankenstein, 1980 style? Ready or not, Herb Brodtkin and NBC-TV have aired their pilot movie in America and a series looks highly feasible. Robert Vaughn, an erstwhile man from *UNCLE* is Doctor Franken, and very good he is too. As the latest descendant of the Mary Shelley creation, he works in a modern New York hospital — a wiz et transplants, of course. But this is no send-up, it keeps straight to the Frankenstein formula. Robert Perault is the modern monster, made up from a body that took Vaughn's fancy in the hospital morgue. Sparked back to life, as it were, Bob starts hunting around for his identity, his girlfriend and indeed the men who killed him in the first place. These two guys, the doc and the shock, will continue their touring adventure in a full series. Missing from hereon, though, and that's a pity, will be Teri

Gerr, from CE3K and Mel Brook's *Young Frankenstein*. She was terrific in a badly-written role. Also in the pilot's cast, by the way, was Cynthia Harris — last seen as Edward Fox's Mrs Simpson! From *Edward VIII* to *Doctor Franken* is one huge leap...

## FRANK'S BACK II

Hard on the fangs of the *Dracula* plays, the American theatre is still plugging away, trying to force stage success out of Mary Shelley's beastie. The *Frankenstein Affair* is running off-Broadway in New York, as a two-act play with a matching twin-set storyline. Set in the Shelley home in Switzerland, it follows the daily encounters of Mary and Byron as she writes her book — which comes alive on a laboratory set. Critics weren't very impressed, except by Allen Brunn's work as the monster. The play is written and directed by a certain Kan Eulo. Winning better notices, and bigger audiences, is Tim Kelly's version of Mary's book — *The Rage of Frankenstein*, starring Robert Herbert as Victor F. Both shows have a rival though in...

## PAS-DE-DRAC

Despite the sudden splurge of *Dracula* plays and films last year, the old neck-biter is never down for the count for long. American choreographer Joel Schne has produced a full-length ballet on the theme entitled *Dracula and Other Vampires*. The action has a choreographer working on just such an idea and finding it takes over his life. All this to music by Sibelius, Hanzla, Bolcom and others, including Schne himself. Well, I suppose, if you've got it — you flaunt it!

## DOUBLE BILL?

Two new movies, one afoot in Quebec, the other in good old LA, will eventually make a great double bill. They're called *Coffin*... and *The Hearse*.

## WHOOOPS

Yet another body blow for the Disney doodlers. British film-maker Michael Armstrong — currently shooting an animation version of the *Kan Early* album, *The Enchanted Orchestra* with David Niven — has a company he calls *Fantasia Ltd*. Disney may not like it. But there's not one little thing it can do about it. Armstrong's firm is registered in Eire — the one country this side of the Iron Curtain where the Disney lawyers forgot to copyright the name.



## LIVELY LASS

Left: Jamie Lee Curtis, daughter of *Psycho*'s Janet Leigh struts her stuff in *Rock 'n' Roll High School*, the new one from *Death-race 2000*'s Paul Bartel.

Too long in the shadows — and such shadows! — perky P.J. Soles hits the big-time in the absolutely knockout musical-meyhem movie from Roger Corman's combine, *Rock 'n' Roll High School*. P.J., you should — you must remember, was one of Sissy Spacek's evil school-aides in *Carrie* and more or less the same again with Jamie Lee Curtis in *Halloween*. There's nothing shadowy about her lively rock 'n' rolling Riff in her excellent starring debut... which also features *Deathrace 2000* director Paul Bartel in another of his madcap acting cameos. If you've seen all the fantasy genre stuff on show locally (or even if you haven't) take a dip into *Rock 'n' Roll High School*. It's a blast.

The next sound you hear is that of a legal beggie's head rolling...

## EMPIRE TREKS BACK!

Two of the stars from the great Christmas-New Year's box-office battle are calling a truce and getting together for *Attack*, a new movie with some British locations. They are Gery Nelson, director of *The Black Hole*, and the lovely Persis Khambatta, *Star Trek*'s Ilia. Gary, who



took us recently that he's a big *Star Wars* fan, has also signed up one of the George Lucas sequel team, Billy Dee Williams, from *The Empire Strikes Back*. Doesn't leave much room for the top lined star, Sylvester Stallone, to swing a fist around. The film, by the way, is about terrorist warfare.

## PATIENT PRESSMAN

If you stick to your guns and wait long enough, everything will happen in movies. That seems to be the philosophy of Edward R. Pressman, Brian De Palma's producer on *Sisters* (1973)

and *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974). He's been waiting ages to get his Conan movie off the ground (so has poor Arnold Schwarzenegger). Now it's going to happen with more than a little help from Dino De Laurentiis in Germany. Pressman is also finally about to get *The Damolished Man* moving at long last. He owes the revival of interest in this long-discussed De Palma venture from the Alfred Bester book to the newest tycoon in Film City, real estate millionaire Keith Barish, who is suddenly investing in movies all over town. So far De Palma's plans on *Men* have moved from his *Obsession* producer George Litto to his *Fury* boss, Frank Yablens, and the home of most Hollywood sf, 20th Century-Fox. It's not confirmed as yet if De Palma is still concerned with the project but I suspect he is. "I've been interested in this book for almost 15 years now," he said two years ago. "It's really a hard, big picture to do — a psychic thriller set in the future, very complicated, a lot of telepathy and I'd like to move in some other areas before I come back to it."

Both Pressman films have been scripted by Oliver Stone, a hot number since *Midnight Express*. Stone is also writing and directing another pet Pressman project, *The Hand* —



Producer Edward Pressman (pictured right).

based on Mark Brøndel's *The Lizard's Tale*. Michael Caine is sterring in this one, right after finishing De Palma's new film, *Dressed to Kill*. They stick together these boys...

## HEADS!

America is waking up to the fact that not only Americans make science fiction. French ace director Bertrand Tavernier's *Deathwatch* — shot in Scotland, by the way — has been smartly picked up for distribution in the United States before any interest has been shown from Britain. "I think it's the first time a French production was sold to the States before it was even shot," says a justifiably proud Tavernier. The movie, as mentioned here before, stars Romy Schneider as the victim of a ghoulish TV programme monitoring her death from a lingering disease. She flees from the deal and Harvey Keitel (from Nic Roeg's upsetting new gem, *Bad Timing*) gives chase... with a TV camera implanted in his head. Harvey seems to be leading with his head quite a lot of late. He operates the gigantic robot, Hector, by direct relay from his brain in Stanley Donen's *Saturn 3*.



French director Bertrand Tavernier.

## OMEN III

The third and final chapter in the bizarre history of Damien Thorn is being scripted by Andrew Birkin. *Omen III* dovetails the original thoughts for a third and fourth sequel. Damien is now in his 30s, as the young — if not the youngest — US Ambassador to Britain. As such he's following in the diplomatic footsteps of his "father", Gregory Peck, in the first film. Just what Satan's kid can do in the Grosvenor Square embassy can only be guessed at for now. It won't be nice, that's for sure. And a 1981 release will tell all. But I'm sure that mammoth American eagle on the roof is going to come crashing down on some poor British character actor's unsuspecting head...

## REVIVAL

Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder* (1954) has been back on American screens — in its original 3D version. A lengthy searh through studio vaults unearthed the vital right and left eye negatives, and the film has been attracting big audiences. Could be, we'll get it next. Be a great way of celebrating Hitch's knighthood. I gather when Grace Kelly reaches back, behind her head for those wicked scissors, her hand almost scrapes the audience's chins...

## COMEBACK

Hollywood director Richard Fleischer is about to make a welcome return to the fantasy genre. The men who made *Fantastic Voyage* (1966) and *Soylent Green* (1972) and lately bought a horror-movie spoof idea called... *They Came from Downstairs*. Fleischer, of course, is the son of the Austrian-born Max Fleischer, creator of *Betty Boop* and connected with the Popeye cartoons. Max died in 1973; his led is now 64.

## SF INFLUENCE

Nothing succeeds like an sf success. For the actors, I mean. Take *Alien*'s Harry Dean Stanton... the Nostromo's engineer. He has been busy enough since entering movies in 1958 with an Alan Ladd film, and keeps popping up in movies on TV these days: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Cool Hand Luke*, *Pet Garrett and Biffy the Kid*, etc. His star only really began to shine when he signed on for a round trip aboard the *Nostromo* starship. John Huston starred him in his over-praised religious satire, *Wise Blood*. He has a sharp little cameo as a Country and Western singer in *Bette Midler's The Rose*. He's joined Goldie Hawn's military comedy, *Private Benjamin* and he's been asked to play Canada's first great train-robbler in *The Grey Fox* in Vancouver. He also makes a return to sf in the French film, *Death-*



Above: Harry Dean Stanton as he appears in *The Rose*.

*watch*... and thereby henge a tale. While shooting *Alien* in London, Harry mentioned he wanted to visit Scotland and a small town up there, name of Stanton. "I've a feeling my ancestors may have come from there — my name originally meant Stone-town." French director Bertrand Tavernier must have read that item. *Deathwatch* was shot in Scotland.

## SIGOURNEY NEWS

Also keeping busy, the sole survivor of the *Alien* encounter... oh, all right then, the sole *human* survivor. I refer, of course, to the very Fondesh Sigourney Weaver. She has a complete change of pece in one of those high-quality Public Broadcasting Service TV plays from



America, *The Sorrow of Gin* by John Cheever. "Sig" plays the wife of an ed man, both of whom talk much about loving their family and then forget them in the ret (and booze) race of today's society. Rethar more up our street — at least, it sounds that way — is her new Israeli movie, *Madman*, co-starring Michael Back, he who led *The Warriors*. Siggy's next film will be in Hollywood, Pater Yates' Hitchcockian thriller, *The Janitor Does Not Dance*, with Christopher Plummer. I think we can safely expect her TV play to land up on BBC-2; more news of both movies when we have it.

## ROBO-MAN

A cartein William Sachs, a new name to me, is directing his own script of *Galaxina* in Los





studio. "Let Francis (Coppola) and George (Lucas) buy the studios," he grins. "I'll just mooch off them. I'm a lousy businessman, because I have no inclination or patience for balancing books and running a company. I don't think people realise how difficult it is to make a movie, whether a small romantic comedy or a huge mega-production like 1941. It's the hardest thing in the world I can imagine anyone ever doing." Compared to what, Steve — heart-transplants?

## NEW NAME

America has obviously been depressed enough this year what with Iran and Afghanistan, not to mention Ted Kennedy. And so Irwin Allen has agreed to a new title for *The Day the World Ended*. It's now: *When Time Ran Out*. . . This is the lavish disaster movie set in Pacific tropics with Allen's usual bunch of people brought together by circumstances (or Warner Brothers' budgets). Paul Newman and Jacqueline Bisset play "the searching couple trying to secretly come to terms with each other in an incredible adventure that begins at the edge of destruction," it says here, "a crucial struggle against an awesome force." William Holden — like Newman, another veteran of *The Towering Inferno* — is also involved. He plays what Allen describes in his usual hype-manner as "a power-wielding head of a multi-million-dollar empire, a man forced to choose between life and death for himself and those around him." But didn't he play that in *Inferno* and anyway, don't you get the feeling you've seen all this before?

In fact, the entire enterprise sounds very much like *The Towering Inferno Goes East*. In San Francisco, Bill Holden was a wealthy construction boss who had erected the world's tallest skyscraper and watched it decimated by fire, remember? Now on the Polynesian isle of Kaleleu, what else is Holden but another construction baron, flying into the island to check the progress of his new mammoth hotel . . . right next door to a volcano called Mauna Nui. Jackie Bisset is Holden's publicity lass — who has to sell the hotel and volcano in her advertising copy: "It smokes while you sleep". At least, Paul Newman is not the architect this time. In fact, he switches white collar for blue as a wildcat oil-driller, the first guy to realise something is afoot. Mauna Nui is not sleeping while the guests smoke . . . Abnormal seismometer read-outs confirm the kind of subterranean pressure that Irwin Allen must dream about every night.

For those who went to stay there in the summer, the film was actually shot in and around the Kona Surf Hotel in Hawaii, plus the Nanihoa Surf Hotel and of course, inside the Mauna Kea volcano, which sounds like one of Mork's greetings. So, I gather, does the film.

The Barrier Between  
Life and Death  
is No Greater Than the  
Thickness of a Door.  
And Now —

The Door is Open!



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NEWTON EWING X JANE FARRAR X  
CROWN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES PRESENTS  
"THE HEARSE" X A CROWN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES PRODUCTION X

Not a car to hitch-hike in . . . George Bower's *The Hearse*, in which Joseph Cotton was a last minute replacement for a swiftly departing Martin Landau, is the movie which columnist Crawley suggests would make a great double-bill alongside Canada's *The Coffin*.

## LAST WORD

Everyone's a critic. And why ever not? On a *Star Trek* poster on a London underground station, while delivering this column to the Marvel office this very day, I spied the following inspired graffiti comment. "Rubbish always sells best". See? It just goes to show that — no matter what Paramount and the other movie conglomerates think — you can't fool all of the people all of the time!

## EDITOR'S PLEA

Unless you started at the back of this issue of *Starburst* you'll be more than aware that we have dedicated this issue to the lovely ladies of the fantasy film genre. Now we are anxious to hear your reactions to this radical departure from the main stream, *Starburst*-style features. Do we get a pat on the back? Or a deluge of criticism? Let us know soon, though, because we have a whole heap of photos left over . . .

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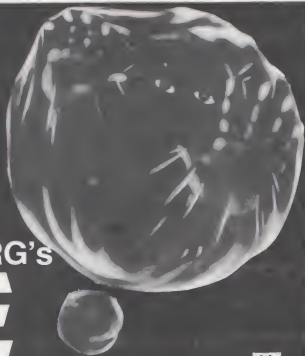


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# 20,000 LEAGUES

ONE OF JULES VERNE'S BOOKS, *20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA*, FORMED THE BASIS FOR DISNEY

**J**ules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* was first published in 1870 in France. The first film version was made by Wallace McCutcheon in 1904 and featured serial queen Pearl White. The early master of fantastic cinema, George Melies unveiled his version in 1907. In 1916, Hollywood offered an alternative version Verne's story written and directed by Stuart Paton. This successful filming of the story was also burlesqued by Hollywood with a cartoon made by Paul Terry, called *Twenty Thousand Feet Under the Sea* (1917). Another animated short, *Twenty Thousand Legs Under the Sea* (1918), featured the *Katzenjammer Kids*. In 1952, Czech animator/director Karel Zeman included elements of the story in his French production, *Les Voyages Extraordinaires de Jules Verne*. Many later feature films (as well as a 1951 serial version of *Mysterious Island*) would also feature the Captain Nemo character: *Mysterious Island* (1960), which featured the stop motion animation work of Ray Harryhausen), *The Stolen Airship* (1969, directed by Karel Zeman), *Captain Nemo* and the *Underwater City* (1969) and *The Amazing Captain Nemo* (1975).

When the Walt Disney studio decided to film Verne's novel in 1954, it was an attempt to break away from the animated features and true life animal documentaries that the studio was best known for. It should also be remembered that the 1950s science fiction boom was in full swing at the time and the studio saw in the Verne novel a ready-made premise on which to base a big budget science fantasy feature.

## Disney was personally involved in all aspects of filming on *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

The film was in pre-production a full year before the cameras rolled, with Disney himself personally involved in all aspects of the filming. Wisely deciding to shoot much of the film on location and underwater Disney was able to utilise much of the knowledge he had gained during the filming of his documentaries.

Disney chose a young director, Richard Fleischer, whose previous credits included *The Narrow Margin* and *Happy Time* and who had won an Academy Award in 1948 for a documentary he had co-produced, *Design for Death*. Fleischer would later direct another science fiction film in 1967, *Fantastic Voyage*, which also dealt with a submarine journey though in that film the locale would be the interior of the human body.

Following a long period of location scouting, the film went before the cameras in January 1954 in the Bahamas, near the resort town of Nassau. The location had been chosen for its particularly clear, warm water and the exotic ocean life that abounded in the area. However, before filming could begin on the nine million dollar production, many obstacles had to be overcome. As much of the film was to be shot underwater, it was necessary to encase the standard Mitchell cameras in water-tight containers.

Special external controls were added thus allowing the camera operators to adjust both aperture and focussing. Another camera, a French model called the Aquaflex which had stabilizing fins and a tail, was also employed to enable the smooth gliding underwater shots.

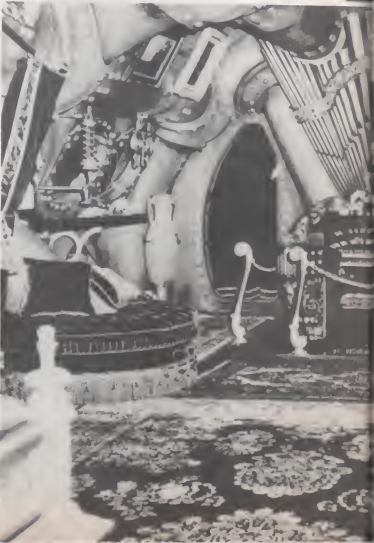
Another problem encountered involved the diving suits worn by Nemo's crew. During World War Two, the British Navy had devised a suit that made it possible for the wearer to breathe recirculated air for a long period after it had first

passed through a chemical processing unit. However, these "re-breathers", as they were known, were highly dangerous and prone to failure. The film's designers came up with an alternative. They devised a suit that could house a small aqualung and, through a system of hoses and pipes, feed the suits' wearers oxygen via a mouthpiece.

A great deal of attention was also lavished on the design of the *Nautilus*, Nemo's submarine and the focal point of much of the action in the script. Robert Fulton, an engineer, had been experimenting with a submersible craft in 1797 and it was after his invention that Verne had named the *Nautilus*. Disney wanted the film's submarine to follow Verne's description and gave it the look of Victorian construction, so rather than a sleek ship, the *Nautilus* was designed with heavily rivetted plates and enormous "eyes" at its prow to enhance the effect of menace.

Several models were built, ranging in size from eighteen inches to twenty-two feet. In addition a full size mock-up was built from plywood over a wooden frame for several scenes. One original Verne idea dropped from the sub's design was the moveable tail which lashed about destroying ships. In the Disney version, the *Nautilus* would become an aquatic battering ram, neatly slicing through ships crewed by superstitious sailors who thought they were being preyed upon by a sea monster.

The interior of the *Nautilus* was designed by Harper Goff who rightly decided that the set should reflect the character of





# UNDER THE SEA

S FIRST SF FILM.

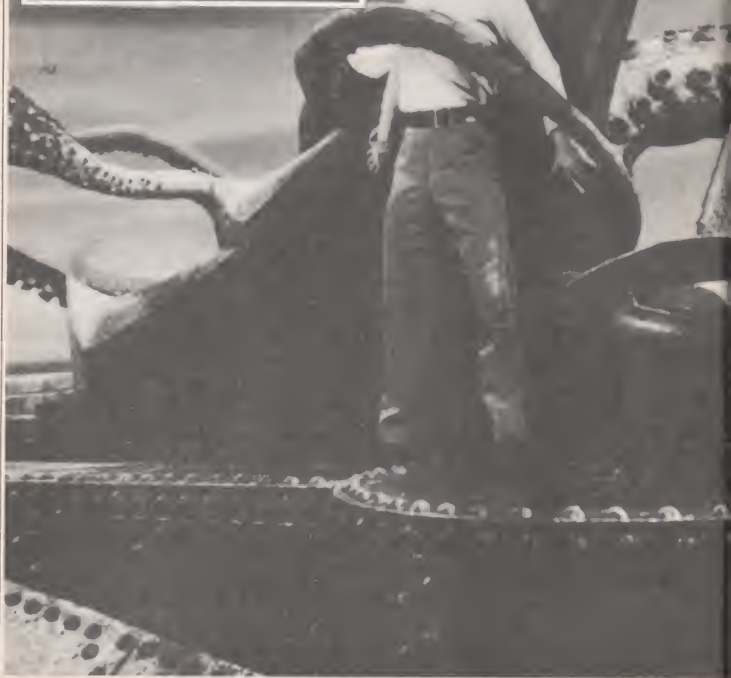
PHIL EDWARDS TAKES A LOOK BACK AT THE MAKING OF THE MOVIE.



Above left: The Nautilus had a Victorian look. Above right: The squid which attacks the submarine in a spectacular display of special effects. Below left: Nemo's pipe organ was constructed of plaster. Below right: An early design painting of Nemo's submarine.



Below: Prof Aronnax (Paul Lukas), Ned Land (Kirk Douglas), Conseil (Peter Lorre), and Capt Nemo (James Mason).  
Right: The huge squid attacks the Nautilus



Below: Today the Nautilus is docked at Disneyworld in Florida, USA.



## 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA

Nemo. Of particular note is Nemo's lounge which houses a huge, ornamental pipe organ. The organ was sculpted from plaster by Chris Mueller, who had been responsible for the head of the *Creature from the Black Lagoon*.

The interior of the *Nautilus* is indeed beautiful and was doubtless one of the reasons that the film collected the Academy Award for *Best Colour Art Direction* in 1954. It also picked up the award for *Best Special Effects*.

Although much of the film was shot on location, it was also necessary to build a tank for miniature shots such as the sinking of the ships. Disney constructed a massive sound stage at his Burbank Studios in which was built a tank that measured 90 by 165 feet. The depth of the tank ranged from three to twelve feet. It was here that the shots involving the *Nautilus* miniatures as well as the setpiece of the film, the battle with the giant squid, were filmed.

The squid sequence has rightfully gone into movie history as one of the best special effects scenes ever filmed. Constructed at a cost of two hundred thousand dollars from rubber, spring steel, flexible tubing, fibre glass, lucite and plastic, the monster was operated through a system of hydraulics, air tubes and wires by a team of twenty-eight men. The sequence took eight days to film capturing approximately five minutes of screen time.

As with the current movie, *The Black Hole*, Disney mustered the entire creative personnel of the studio to work on the complex production. Peter Ellenshaw (production designer on *The Black Hole*) was a matte artist at the time,

**The film was only marginally successful though all reviews complimented the technical effects.**

one of the best in the business. His portrayal of *Vulcania*, Nemo's island, seen in the closing moments of the movie remains one of the most evocative matte paintings ever committed to celluloid. Other effects people involved included Ub Iwerks the veteran animator, Bob Mattey (who worked on the mechanics of the squid and would later go on to design the shark "Bruce" in Spielberg's classic, *Jaws*) and animator Josh Meador who would also later create a memorable monster in *Forbidden Planet* — the Monster from the Id.

Disney chose his cast carefully. And even today James Mason makes a memorable Nemo. Intense, ruthless and given to moments of brooding, particularly after he has sent souls to the bottom of the sea. Kirk Douglas' Ned Land is the blustery harpooner and nominal hero of the film. Paul Lukas brings a quiet dignity to his portrayal of the captured Professor Aronnax who, despite his desire to escape from the prison of the *Nautilus*, is at the same time fascinated by the scientific wonders it holds. Perhaps the strangest casting is that of Peter Lorre as Aronnax's assistant, Conseil. Lorre at that time was best known for his villainous roles, however the character, as portrayed by Lorre, is more a comic relief bumbler.

Upon its release, the film was only marginally successful at the box office and it would take later re-issues to enable the film to recoup its production costs. The critics weren't particularly kind either, slating the film as being a juvenile treatment of the story, though all reviews complimented the film for its technical achievements.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea was released at the height of the fifties, Cold War inspired atomic paranoia and tried, in its closing moments, to make a contemporary statement by having Nemo's island explode in the deadly mushroom of a nuclear blast.

Certainly, the film is suitable for children and was an honest attempt to capture the wondrous world of Jules Verne. Seen twenty-five years after its initial release, the film remains a richly-textured and rewarding version of Verne's classic. ●



Above: The menacing figure of a Nautilus crewman stalks along the sea-bed. Below: Nemo's island retreat is destroyed in an atomic mushroom cloud.





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# STAR TREK VS THE BLACK HOLE

WITH TWO BIG  
BUDGET  
SCIENCE FIC-  
TION MOVIES,

PARAMOUNT'S *STAR TREK* —  
THE MOTION PICTURE AND  
DISNEY'S *THE BLACK HOLE*,  
APPEARING ON THE CINEMA  
CIRCUITS AROUND THE SAME  
TIME WE ASKED SOME OF OUR  
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS TO  
EXAMINE BOTH  
FILMS AND  
DECIDE  
WHICH OF THE  
PAIR THEY  
PREFER.



## TONY CRAWLEY

And the winner is . . . Dark Star! Carpenter and O'Bannon with 75p to spend (or was it 80p?) are still better than any of the high-tech, money-is-no-object, mega movies. Because they follow the essence of sf. Mind over matter. Not money over everything.

For fun and bravura enjoyment, Disney had the edge over the lifeless action men dolls brought out of cryogenic freezers for *Star Trek* — The Motion Picture, known in some quarters as *Star Trek* MP. (Very apt, for it kept as many promises as politicians do.) The fact that it's minting millions is no measure of greatness, simply further proof of Holly-

wood's major axiom: you can fool all of the people some of the time. And that could be fatal. I fear that *Star Trash* will kill off the current sf resurgence. The public has had a glut of starry heavens, lumbering space craft, and rotten acting. They want stimulation, not mindless repetition.

Above all projects of late, *Star Trek*

should have been the movie to progress the genre, Kubrick style. We would have accepted Kirk and Co, going anywhere. In the event, they went back to the telly — nowhere at all. They made a token effort at being soundly based in sf lore, but it took a devil of a trek to get there. Almost as long as it took Kirk and Scotty to reach the Enterprise in that most self-indulgent of special-effects sequences. I can't recall seeing such a boring scene before. Then again how about Kubrick's trip to the Orion space station in 2001? Maybe ... but he did it with *elan*. He also had something wonderful to show us. We know the Enterprise; not that we could see it, stuffed inside its dry-dock affair.

No, Trek was an unutterable bore from start to almost finish. The mistake was obvious — you don't buy your story from a hack like Alan Dean Foster and merely hire Isaac Asimov as a consultant. Until the *Asimovs* are given a few million to play around with, movie space fantasy will never reach beyond the level of *Battlestar Galactica*. Not even an old surehand like Bob Wise could generate excitement from a crew trapped in the aspic of their stolid tv performances, and turning up for the money only. Such was the sole reason behind this sorry venture. But where on earth, or elsewhere, did that thirty million go? We certainly didn't see half of it.

The *Black Hole* spent less — in money and time — and showed the Trekkers a thing or four about effects, mattes, and sheer scope and size of imagination. More Lucas than Kubrick, and far less adult than the Disney hypers kept telling us *Hole* proved the complete antithesis of *Trek* — it was better than we had a right to imagine, given its parentage. The damned robots nearly ruined this 20,000 *Leagues In Space*, though. Roddy McDowall's VINcentthreepious with his Minnie Mouse eyes just shows how old Disney habits die hard. Having ruined the animal kingdom, they've turned now to objects. Why did Slim Pickens' Old Bob have an old man's voice? A robot may get knocked about, and its voice become fractured, unclear, on the blink in mid-sentence, perhaps, but, surely, it would never age. Disney's actors were slightly livelier, too. Some of the props may have had wires (not that I saw any), but the Trekkers seemed to have their hospital-drips attached at times. Kenny Baker is better than any of them and we never see him inside R2-D2!

Both films ended where they should have begun, which, alas, probably signals sequels by 1982. And if the end of *The Black Hole* was a puzzlement, Kubrick started all that and everyone is into it today, as the screen, sf and otherwise, finally matches Jean-Luc Godard's

philosophy that films should naturally have a beginning, middle and end. "But not necessarily in that order."

## ALAN MURDOCH

**Star Trek v The Black Hole?** Good grief, better to compare death by disembowelment with strangulation!

Trek was, in short, a disappointment. Even the special effects (and they were magnificent) failed to salvage *Star Trek* from its own snail-like script. Now that I think of it, perhaps the sheer excellence of the special effects were the cause of the film's downfall. I got the impression that Robert Wise was so impressed by Trumbull and Dykstra's efforts that he couldn't bring himself to trim any of the overlong model sequences. And it was these sequences that slowed the film to the pace of a funeral procession.

**"Both films ended where they should have begun which, alas, probably signals sequels by 1982" — Tony Crawley**

By far the more entertaining picture was *The Black Hole*. Not necessarily a better film — but the Disney team managed to capture a sense of fun that was missing from *Trek*. Nevertheless, all the Disney clichés were in evidence. The cutesie robots (standing in for the cutesie dogs), the likeable but headstrong young man (Joseph Bottoms), the treacherous coward (Ernest Borgnine) and the "mature" romantic leads (Robert Forster and Yvette Mimieux — why is it no characters in Disney films fall in love before they're forty?).

For me, the high point of the film was an effects shot. The scene with the huge glowing meteor rolling along the interior of the ship was very impressive. Who cares whether it is scientifically feasible or not — it was a great visual!

## PHIL EDWARDS

I have to admit that at the end of *Star Trek* — *The Motion Picture* I should have felt cheated. Here was a film that had forty million dollars lavished on it and the best they could come up with was a

reworked tv episode *Changeling*. However I had been so overwhelmed by the preceding two hours of super technoflash, that the feeling of a "cheat" was quickly dissipated. *Star Trek* had well been worth the wait. From its opening moments, with the attack on the Klingon ships, the film held me rivetted to my seat, wondering what marvels the combined talents of Dykstra and Trumbull would next come up with. Not since *Close Encounters* had the screen been so alive with creative effects.

However, special effects alone do not a movie experience make, so before you think that I am totally taken with pure technology for the sake of it, I will say that the story was far too slim to support the two hours-plus running time. An attempt was made to give the characters some continuity from the TV show, a series much over-rated in my opinion.

Once one got used to the fact that the players had not worn well, physically, in the ten years since the show finished, the film took off on its own merits. If as much care had been spent on story and characterisation as had been poured into effects then *Star Trek* would be a classic.

The *Black Hole*, on the other hand, was a complete disappointment. Disney had promised a super whizz-bang space opera that would compare with *Star Wars* and what they delivered was a tired old rehash of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and *Forbidden Planet*.

The film, despite a two year production schedule, displayed all the marks of a quicky rip-off. An expensive one, granted, but a rip-off none the less. Apart from the tired plot, the insufferably cute robots, the banal dialogue, the pedestrian performances and the determinedly "adult" language — for a Disney film — ("oh hell, oh damn" — what next! I thought, "oh double hell, oh double damn"?) the thing I found most annoying was the special effects. The *Black Hole* was promised to contain scenes that would dazzle the senses. Where *Star Trek* had been saved from its slim plot by the effects, *The Black Hole* contained little innovation in this direction. It was as if nothing new had happened in the last twenty years in the special effects field. Poor matting abounded, clearly visible wires and the big finale, the entry into the *Black Hole* itself, made nonsense of the lavish advance press releases the Disney organisation had issued.

Far be it from me to reveal to those who haven't seen it what lies in the *Black Hole*. However I will say that if it had been Mickey Mouse himself, the effect could not have been more ludicrous.

The final verdict? *Star Trek* — the winner, by two out of three (free) falls.

**O**n the edge of our galaxy, a spectacular explosion occurs, sending a tentacle of cosmic energy to Earth, manifesting itself in a startling light-show and momentarily surrounding an isolated desert homestead in middle America . . .

From then on, all hell breaks loose. Close Encounters (of the fourth kind) meets The Creature from the Black Lagoon, with a suggestion or two of Cecil B. De Mille . . .

Director John "Bud" Cardos (Kingdom of the Spiders, The Dark) calls this confusing fusion: *The Day Time Ended*. And he's not talking about a strike at the magazine. Co-producer Steve Neill's story, scripted by Wayne Schmidt, J. Larry Carroll and David Schmoeller is a UFO thriller; a cheapie, admittedly, though not without its moments.

Jim Davis and Dorothy Malone (Dallas meets Peyton Place) live in the desert house, with their son, daughter, son-in-law and grand-daughter. As with Spielberg, it is the six-year-old kiddie who makes the first and wholly innocent contact with the alien force.

Young Jenny finds a pyramid thing in the back yard, emitting a flashing flow of light and a form of musical communication (by Richard Band, not John Williams). As she watches, the pyramid disappears and is immediately replaced by a miniaturised version . . . something more her size. Unquestioning, she takes this new — found toy home with her and is understandably delighted with its powers. It can turn electricity on and off at will and makes a super job of sealing up cracked mirrors.

Chris Mitchum (blond son of Robert, brother of Jim, and a dead ringer for either of them) is the child's father. He is out of town on a business trip, but it's not long before he's trying to rush back to home and hearth in an awful hurry. Odd things are afoot. An intense electrical storm. The desert ground is opening up in places. His only route back is through a vortex — a dark, massive (not to say, black) hole in the heavens.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the grandparents out for a nocturnal stroll, are met with an intergalactic ballet performed by a pair of glowing UFOs. First they streak across the heavens. Next, they come back for a dancing encore.

This dazzling demonstration awakes the female tot version of Gary Guffey — and soon she's dancing in her bedroom, as well. Her partner is a tiny gremlin creature. She's enjoying herself again, unquestioning as ever, until a mechanical device with long, menacing appendages floats into the room and the imp disappears . . . It reappears in the grandparent's room and warns them of "disturbances" about to threaten their home.

Grandpa Jim Davis is not a veteran of Westerns for nothing. He has a gun in his

## A STARBURST SPECIAL PREVIEW

STILL NO SIGN OF A DECLINE IN THE NUMBERS OF SF PROJECTS BEING UNVEILED IN CINEMAS AROUND THE WORLD. AN AMERICAN OFFERING, *THE DAY TIME ENDED*, SHOULD BE WITH US ANY WEEK NOW. STARBURST PRESENTS A SPECIAL PREVIEW BY BOBBY DUPEA.

# THE DAY TIME ENDED

Below left: Seeking to escape the weird happenings on horseback, Jim Davis comes across two Harryhausen-style monsters locked in combat. Below right: A bizarre collection of hardware found on the far side of the time vortex.



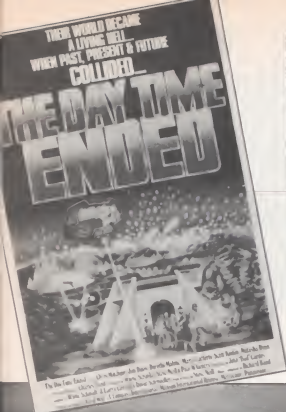
mitt within seconds and shepherds the rest of the family downstairs. Time to split. And fast! They're about to get into their car when the automobile starts up by itself and goes completely bonkers. Young Jenny solves that problem with her mini-pyramid. But the ominous floating mechanicalia returns and everybody rushes back into the house. Silly, silly!

Jim's futile bullets are vaporised in mid-air by this odd device. Once more, it is little Jenny who saves the day — well, the hour at least — with her alien toy. That brings the attack — already burning through the front door — to an abrupt conclusion.

Jim and his son decided to seek help by horseback — and ride straight into yesterday . . . and a touch of tomorrow. They come across two Harryhausen-style monsters in a ferocious battle. They also see a Trumbull-style luminous sphere flashing through the night sky. The ground trembles. Erupts!

Riding back home, they next see their home collapsing. The womenfolk are safe outside. But where in tarnation is young Jenny? Ah, there she is, running towards the house, which is changing its shape before their eyes. Her mother rushes after her — and all barriers breakdown. The house and mother and daughter slip into another dimension. A time warp.





Above: *Dallas*' Jim Davis spears a strange creature with a pitch fork. Below: Chris Mitchum (son of Robert) plays Richard.



**Odd things are afoot.  
An intense electrical  
storm rages. The  
desert ground is  
opening up in places.  
An automobile starts up  
by itself and goes  
completely bonkers!**

Shaken to the core, the remainder of the family unit jump onto their horses to investigate the strange new world emerging around their ears. Creatures of yesterday and tomorrow abound.

Suddenly, there is Jenny's mother ahead of them. She's different now; she ought to be. She's the only one who seems to know what's what and where it's at. They are, she says, trapped in a dimensional whirlpool. Fear not, they will be cared for by the intelligent life forms in a new city beyond.

The family link up and ride on to where Jenny and Dad (out of his vortex) await them in a splendid city of crystal and light. In, do you see, the future . . .

*Footnote: Jim Davis' character is called Grant Williams — the same as the original Incredible Shrinking Man in 1957.*

#### **The Day Time Ended (1980)**

Chris Mitchum (as Richard), Jim Davis (Grant Williams), Dorothy Malone (Anna Williams), Marcy Lafferty (Beth), Scott Kolden (Steven Williams), Natasha Ryan (Jenny).  
Directed by John "Bud" Cardos, Story by Steve Neill, Screenplay by Wayne Schmidt, J. Larry Carroll and David Schmoeller, Music by Richard Band, Executive producer Charles Band, Production executive by David Wolf, Producers, Wayne Schmidt, Steve Neill, Paul W. Gentry. Released in the USA by Compass International/Manson International.  
Time: 80 mins No British Certificate.

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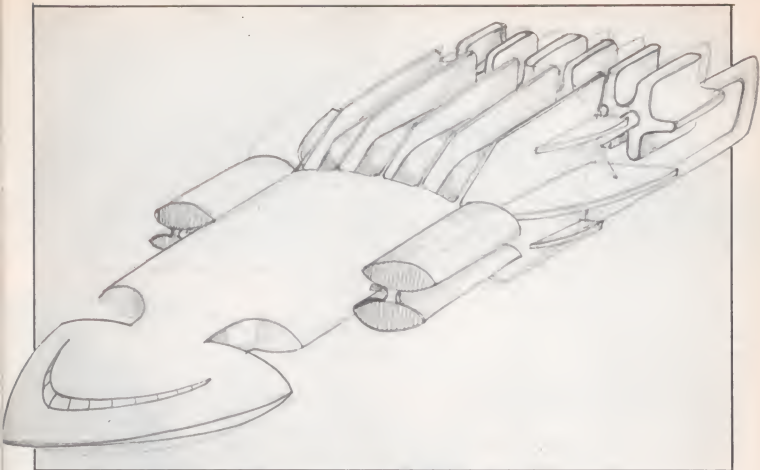
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## BLAKE'S 7 SPECIAL EFFECTS

**O**bviously, Ian Scoones had a major impact on the series. He designed the Liberator, the basic Federation craft, the handguns and much more. Mat Irvine, too, made his mark on Blake's 7. So how far were Drewett and Francis inhibited and restricted because they were working on an already-established series?

Jim Francis says, "we've tried to stamp our own identity on it just by the way we treat the materials. We've really gone out to be as real as possible. One of the things we've tried to do is to make things look used. If we've got weapons, we try to make them look as though they've been used and not as though they've come straight from a factory. We always try to give them plenty of weight, to the point of deliberately weighting them so that they don't fly about. Just to make them look functional. They've got to look as though the parts on them aren't just stuck on, they're there for a reason. And most of the handguns actually fire pyrotechnically rather than just flash. The main Liberator guns still have beams but, with the new guns, we've tried to incorporate pyrotechnics purely

The original Visual Effects Designer on Blake's 7 was Ian Scoones (watch out for interview in upcoming Starburst). He was joined halfway through series one by Mat Irvine (see Starburst 17), who took over for series two. The new effects designers on series three are Steve Drewett and Jim Francis. To find out what changes they've tried to make, John Fleming went to talk to them at the BBC's effects base in Acton.



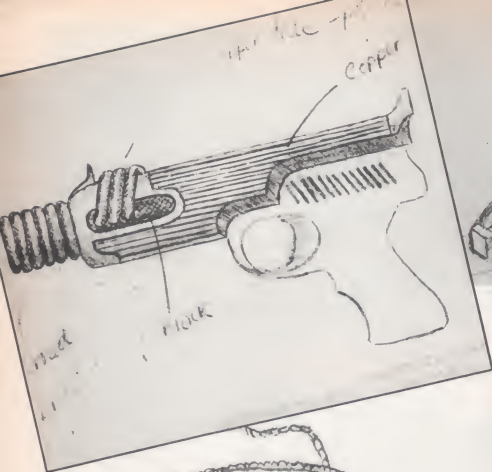
Above: BBC Visual Effects Designer, Jim Francis.

to make them look slightly different." Another reason is that putting beams onto the screen is a time-consuming process.

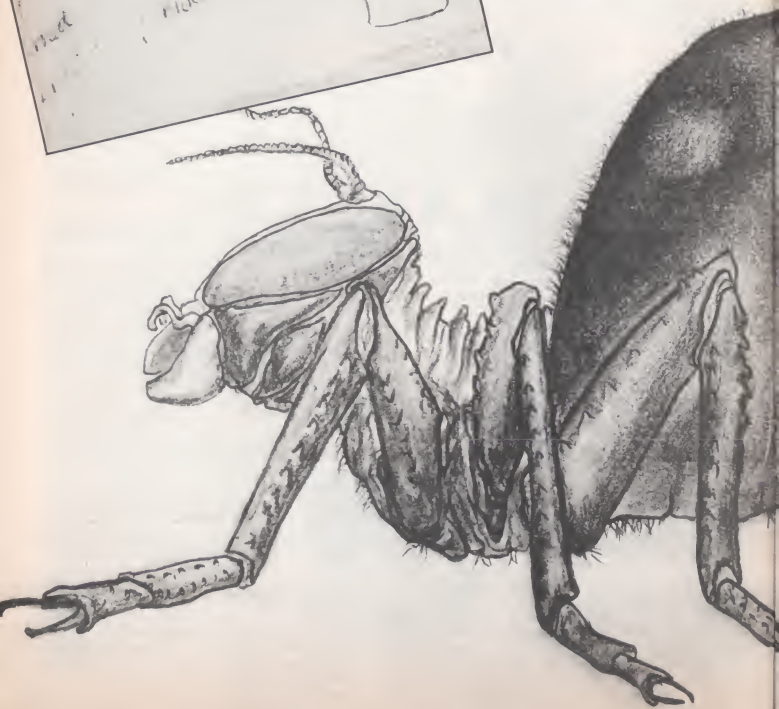
"You see," says Steve Drewett, "the problem is that to put beams on you've got to be in the electronic studio and we always end up with a great rush at the end of the day trying to get the effects on. And if the beams don't line up properly — which is often the case because it takes a while to get it right — then the whole thing is ruined."

So Drewett and Francis have gone for real pyrotechnic effects, packing the explosives tightly to make the bang and flash as fast as possible, thus avoiding a great puff of smoke or cheap-looking sparks. "But doing this," Francis explains, "You run into sound problems — and whether the actor or actress will jump. Actually, one of the artists in Blake's 7 is very, very frightened of any pyrotechnics and, with all the guns and quite big bangs, (the artist) had to wear ear plugs."

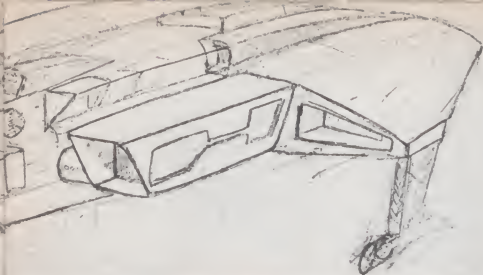
"We're asked for so many little props," says Drewett. "A calculator here, a probe there. And, up until now, they've



Left: Design rough for a compressed air gun.







Above: Concept sketch for a space craft. Below: The rough for the insect monster (see back cover).



**"Instead of just having one (special effects) shot, we'll use cutaways, use three, or four shots and we've had some quite nice successes on that side." — Jim Francis, Visual Effects Designer.**

always been done with little bits of perspex stuck together. What we've done is try to avoid using that kind of technique. We've tried to design each item — no matter how small — which takes a lot more time, but I think it's worth it."

The two designers also try to do this for larger props — like new spacecraft. "Most designers," says Drewett, "go for finding bits, buying bits and sticking them together to make up an object. But we've actually tried to make stuff from scratch — with wooden shapes, vacuum-forming and so on." When I met them, halfway through shooting on the series, time had forced them to start using the normal method of sticking existing bits and pieces together. But, generally, they were still trying to design from scratch as many items as possible.

Jim Francis told me they'd also been trying to talk the directors into expanding the effects scenes: "In the script, it might say *A ship docks* or *A capsule gets launched*. And, instead of just having the one shot, we'll use cutaways, use three or four shots and we've had some quite nice successes on that side. I mean, it's quite a straightforward thing to do a ship docking, but to get it to look real scale-wise involves a lot of different techniques — double and triple exposures and so on."

"It's a bit of a production-line job," Steve Drewett explains, "because we do about twenty shots in a day and some of those are very complicated shots. So what we've done is we've got a video link with a camera so it's easier to double and triple expose each shot."

The system, very basically, is to have a video viewfinder linked to the film camera and a live television screen. They then mark on the screen what is shown in each of the shots with the result that, after double or triple exposure of the film, there is no chance that the images shot separately onto the same piece of film will overlap — for example, no chance that the background stars will overlap onto a spaceship. The system has the advantage that it is quick and cheap: it doesn't require any expensive and time-consuming "optical" work in the film laboratories.

"It's really a cheap optical done in the camera and it's quite effective," Jim Francis told me.

Steve Drewett added: "We did a shot

"It's difficult to make a complete change of style when you're using other people's stock props like the Liberator guns and Federation guns." — Steve Drewett, Visual Effects Designer.

of a ship flying up a valley. If you "fly" a spaceship over a landscape, you've got all your strings and the wobbliness to eliminate and you've got to light your spaceship over the whole track. Also, it stays about the same size in the screen unless you have a gigantic track. So we got quite a nice shot of the ship coming round a mountain and flying up a valley on our triple exposure method, which I don't think's been done before and fortunately turned out quite nice."

"Obviously," says Francis, "every designer on a programme like this tries to do something different and original. And there's one or two things we feel haven't been seen before. There's a water shot."

Drewett explains: "It's a scene where a capsule was ejected and the director wanted to see it re-enter the atmosphere. So what we did was make a water-rig which reproduces all the gases flying past the capsule. We put two sheets of glass on edge with the water running down — like water running down a window pane. The



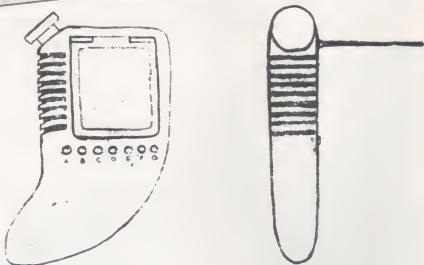
capsule was put between the two sheets of glass and the camera turned on its side. Then we dropped coloured emulsion paints onto the glass so they all ran down. The camera's on its side so, when you see it on the screen, there are all these gases flying past. You actually get the impression that it is flying through an atmosphere."

"The talent," Jim Francis told me, "is here to do almost anything that is done outside at the moment. I went to see *Alien* yesterday and of all the space shots there's not one that any of the designers here couldn't do."

Steve Drewett agrees: "There's just as much talent here as in features. There's actually no difference, really, it's just that we're working with a different set of rules. It's the time and the money. Well, it's the time more than the money." ●



Left: Steve Drewett clowns with a monster for the Starburst photographer. Below: Another design drawing for the series. Bottom: Jim Francis and Steve Drewett pose with a plaster cast of the *Blake's 7* monster head.



DIRECTION INDICATOR.





Above and below: A dazzling array of special effects and behind-the-scenes photos from the third series of *Blake's 7*.





Below: Barbara Bach in *The Humanoid* and Lynda Carter in *Wonder Woman*. Above: Louise Jameson as Leela from *Dr. Who*.



Way back in *Starburst 4* we promised that you would never find scantily-clad sf heroines in this magazine. The result was that we received a steady stream of letters asking why we were pointedly ignoring the female stars of the fantasy movies we covered. So by way of making up for the last sixteen issues we present a feature by Tony Crawley on . . .

## FABULOUS FANTASY FEMALES!

Right: A rare still from Nigel Kneale's *Year of the Sex Olympics*, Elisabeth Sladen as Sarah Jane in *Dr. Who* and Pamela Hensley as Princess Ardala in *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*.

## ATTACK OF THE 50 FT. WOMAN







Below: Diana Rigg as she appeared in the infamous Hellfire Club episode of the *Avengers*, a Melvian from the "Destiny of the Daleks" story in the *Dr Who* series, and the voluptuous Madeline Smith from *Live and Let Die* plus numerous Hammer horror movies.



Below: Jacqueline Pearce as Servalan in *Blake's 7*.

Copyright BBC 1980





Above: Katy Manning as Jo Grant and Mary Tamm as Romone from the BBC tv series *Dr Who*.



Left: Farrah Fawcett as she appears in *Saturn 3*, a new sf movie from Low Grade. Right: Jacqueline Pearce as Blake's 7's Servolen poses for a series of BBC Wardrobe Department test shots.



**S**o far, Starburst has run pictorial specials on aliens (issue 10) and robots (issue 12), of which I know little, though I'm learning daily. Now the magazine has moved towards an area I'm more comfortable with. The ladies... The women of the fantasy genre. Or: Fantasy Women. An assignment to drool over, more than to write about. Fortunately, these pictures speak volumes every one, so who wants to hear from me...?

All women in movies are fantasies. That's why we love them. (Much the same goes for movies, themselves, of course). The girl remains in the mind rather than the mind's eye long after her movies because the very fantasy of her

remains. The reverie she builds up within your consciousness plugs into your own dream-wishes, and not only because of the fantasy she has been placed in by any director or scriptwriter... although that helps. Fundamentally, it's the girl, more than her character, that works on you, whether because of her face, form, figure, talent or setting.

Jane Fonda warmed the world with her antics as Barbarella in 1968; she's with us again in what could be termed a fantasy film, *The China Syndrome*. She's changed completely. She's liberated now, politically activated, an assured actress, and a mother to boot. A wholly different woman. A different fantasy to conjure

with. And indeed there are those who prefer her TV news reporter to her Bardot-like fantasy-doll in Vadim's first (and unhappily, last) sf movie.

"Look at Barbarella today and it was a hell of a job," says John Derek. "But her acting, I don't think, is any better now than it was then. She's just doing different parts. Parts that we will accept her doing."

John Derek, it should perhaps be pointed out here, knows all about fantasy women. He's discovered and married about as many of them as Vadim. John's second wife was Ursula Andress. His third was Linda Evans, Steve McQueen's girl in his new Western. Now, John is wed to

**Left: Vintage Welch.**  
From the depths of the sixties Requel as she appeared in her first starring role — as a ledy scientist in *Fantastic Voyage* (1966). She made more of a name for herself in Hemmer's *One Million Years BC*.

**Left: Caroline Munro,**  
reckoned by many fans to be the undisputed first lady of fantasy. Her films include *Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, *At the Earth's Core* and of course *Stella Star/Starcrash*, still to be released nationally in this country.



this year's newest fantasy siren, the 10 girl, Bo Derek. Suppress your envy... we also serve, who stand (in cinema queues) and watch (from cinema seats) and dream and hope...

Incidentally, Bo tells me she was offered the old Fay Wray role in the new King Kong. She turned it down because the first script wasn't up to much. "It was full of one-liners... dirty jokes". Jessica Lange took over the cleaned-up version, and it's good to know she's headed back our way soon as a fantasy figure — the angel of death, no less — in Bob Fosse's extraordinary *All That Jazz* movie.

So what (apart from Messrs Vadim and Derek) makes a fantasy woman? You do. In your head. Does Anne Francis count because of *Forbidden Planet*? I suppose so, though she was never my cup of fantasy. I always found Robby the Robot much more of a turn-on. This year we'll have Lily Tomlin, of all people, as *The Incredible Shrinking Woman*. I'm not very excited at the prospect. I'd much rather re-run the final ten minutes of *Sigourney Weaver* in *Alien* than watch Lily shrink.

Now before our female readership starts reaching for pen and vitriol, I agree with them. Such a view as I've just expressed about the bobbing and weaving *Weaver* is highly chauvinistic. But surely any true lover of fantasy women has to be a male chauvinist. If he were not, where would the fantasy stem from... how would it work? So, before going any further, let's make one point very clear. The nub of any winning fantasy female (or male, come to that) has to be sex-appeal. There's no way around that — it's a fact. If intellect comes into it, it's more on the part of the audience praising a new fantasy find and hypocritically listing reasons for her excellence other than her sexuality, rather than for any intellectual performance or characterisation.

Raquel Welch had her first starring role as a woman scientist entering the bloodstream of a dying scientist in *Fantastic Voyage*. But she only conquered the world, and in particular the newspaper picture-editors, in her doe-skin bikini in *One Million Years BC*. Both films were genuine, 24-karat fantasy films. One had a strong script (it derived, after all, from Isaac Asimov), the other had far more flesh on display. That's the one everyone remembers best. So does Raquel. It made her a star. Her body, what she famously referred to as her "equipment", fed our collective fantasy, more so than the one we happened to be watching her in, and certainly more so than her scientific mind did for us in her Asimovian trip through the human blood stream. Some ways have said *Fantastic Voyage* would have been rather more fantastical, if we had traversed through

Raquel's own abundant corps. Maybe so.

And so, I'll apologise for any further chauvinistic views no more. I don't need to defend myself, or indeed any of my like-minded readers. No fantasy woman can succeed without a touch, at the very least, of eroticism — latent or blatant. The fantasy she fires in our brain has to be bigger, better than the one she plays out on the screen before us. That's why we remember the ladies that we do, and forget the others. Think about it as you browse through this picture gallery. Well, you don't have to think too hard... your eye is immediately drawn to the women you remember in that secret place in your head.

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**No fantasy woman can succeed without a touch, at the very least, of eroticism — latent or blatant. The fantasy she fires in our brain has to be bigger than the one she plays out on the screen.**

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Now keep quiet! I'm thinking...

I'm thinking of Raquel in doe-skin and the best of her camp-followers in those Hammer prehistoric movies... Victoria Vetri, Imogen Hassall, Carole White even, and best of them all, Martine Beswick. I'm thinking of Joanna Lumley, dressed to the neck, in *Sapphire and Steel*. I'm thinking of Marisa Mell in *Danger — Diabolik*. I'm thinking of Julie Christie, tv-style, in *A for Andromeda* (but no, I'm not thinking of her successor, Susan Hampshire. Sorry about that, Sue). I'm thinking of Brit Eklund in *The Wicker Man*, but not so much in *The Man with the Golden Gun*. I'm thinking of Corinne Clery in *Moonraker* and *The Humanoid* and the last time I had lunch with her. I'm thinking of Nichelle Nichols in *Star Trek* — in the tv series, not the boring Motion Picture.

I can think further back than that, too. Back to Brigitte Helm in *Metropolis* in 1926. (How did a robot get in here?) And if you want to go back that far, you can't help but think and dream of the screen's all-time perfect creation, Louise Brooks, in *Pandora's Box* (1929). But that is another thesis and Ken Tynan has beaten me to it. Damn his nerve.

What's that...? You're thinking of Caroline Munro in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*. Are you mad? You're thinking of Heather Menzies in *Logan's Run* and of

Farrah Fawcett in the film version. Well, there's no accounting for taste. What — you're thinking of Margherita Scott in *Korda's Thing To Come*? Well, that'll please her I'm sure; she's 68 this year. And what... say again... of Elsa Lanchester in *The Bride of Frankenstein* and Gloria Talbot marrying her monster from outer space in 1957?

Good grief... I suppose you're musing now of Erin Gray and Pamela Hensley in *Buck Rogers*...!

All I can say, dear readers, you think of your fantasy women and leave me to mine...

That's the other important aspect of such ladies, of course. They work their magical muses on different people. You may go a bundle on Terri Garr in *Close Encounters*. I prefer Mary Tamm in *Dr. Who*. You may carry a torch for the late Susan Denberg from *Frankenstein*. Created Woman — but give me Madeline Smith any day.

The fantasy range covers all sizes, colour, creeds, countries and, of course, screens — the big and small. From Barbara Eden, having to keep her navel covered in *I Dream of Jeannie* on American tv, to Ingrid Pitt covering not one square inch of herself in her Hammer and associated genre days. From Valerie Perrine adding the all important sex-appeal to *Vonnegut's* *Montana Wildhack* in *Slaughterhouse 5* to Carrie Fisher's tomboy in *Star Wars*.

Or indeed, from Nic Roeg's hedonistic Theresa Russell in *Bad Timing* with Denholm Elliott, to Judy Lim and Lisa Lu in *Saint Jack* with Denholm Elliott. From Francis de la Tour in *Rising Damp* (*The Movie*) with Denholm Elliott to Brooke Adams in *Cuba* with... Denholm Elliott. The suave Mr Elliott is winning more work than most fantasy females at present; it's about time his superior talent was put to work in something close to our favoured genre.

Meanwhile, it must now be stated that Brooke Adams, a firm fave rave I gather with many since *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is really the most miserable looking leading lady on film today. Veronica Cartwright's navigator in *Alien* looks a barrel of laughs compared with her.

I've gone off — well off Brooke Adams. Brooke Bond does more for me.

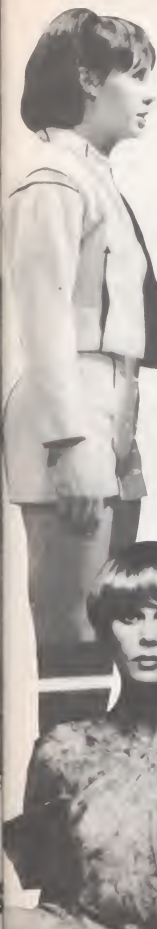
On closer examination, the fantasy women fell into two broad (hah!) categories. Those who can act. And those who can't. Or, to be even more precise, those who can act and those who are paid not to trouble their pretty little heads too much, beyond looking attractive enough in some form of futuristic and/or prehistoric bikini. There are more starlets in fantasy films



Left: Especially for a group of Humberside fens who have been pestering us for almost a year we present "cute leggy Zoe" (Wendy Padbury). Right: Yet more *Dr Who* assistants (clockwise): Romane (Lalle Ward), Victorie (Deborah Wetling), Jo Grant (Katy Manning) and Polly (Anneke Wills).

Below: The last *Avengers* girl, Purdy, was played with panache by Joanna Lumley. Joanna has been seen recently on Independent Television in *Sapphire and Steel*.

Below right: The *Battlestar Galactica* girls: Sirena (Jane Seymour), Athena (Maren Jensen) and Cassiopea (Laurette Sprang).



than actresses (more's the pity). Do I really have to name them? Oh come on, you know who they are . . . Julie Ege, Caroline Munro, Jane Seymour, Maren Jensen, Susan Anton, Batgirl's Yvonne Craig and indeed Catwoman's Julie Newmar and Lee Merriwether, and all five Charlie's Angels, headed of course by that complete and utter non-runner as far as fantasy women, or indeed fantasies themselves are concerned, Farrah Fawcett.


Farrah sells — or sold — more pin-up posters than cinema tickets. And if Saturn 3 emerges as anything like a box-office winner, it won't be anything to do with her, but the star of our next robot pictorial, Hector. Fortunately enough, for

all of the above dross, we still have such talented visions around as Dominique Sanda in *Damnation Alley*, Barbara Bain in *Space 1999* (Catherine Schell, too, come to that), Faith Domergue (a blast from the past in *This Island Earth*), Leigh Taylor-Young in *Soylent Green*, and Lynne Frederick in the abysmally wasted *Phase IV*. And, naturally, Jenny Agutter is acceptable in anything at all. Or, indeed, in nothing at all!

Emma Sams showed more than a hint of Eastern promise in *Arabian Adventure* (I expect to see her joining Tom Baker's *Dr Who* any day now). Sissy Spacek was supreme in *Carrie*. Barbara Kellerman staved off a rotten script and unctuous

co-stars in the last tv *Quatermass*. Jamie Lee Curtis was fair enough in *Halloween*, but P.J. Soles is much livelier. And did you realise it was the great Patricia Neal all those years ago in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* . . . ?

Then, of course, there is the Bond bunch. Ursula Andress still leads this field. She is, along with Bardot, the very model for each and every fantasy woman since the 50s became the 60s. Ian Fleming created the mould: read any 007 book and when he draws his picture of the leading lady, the description is always the same. It's Bardot, from tip to toe. Brigitte, however, was never interested in filming outside of France — or French



Left: *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* was livened up by the presence of Princess Ardale (Pamela Hensley). Right: Meanwhile, 44 years ago, Princess Aura (Pricilla Lawson) was livening up *Flash Gordon* (1939).



The Girl with the Golden Tonsils, the lovely screamer herself, Fay Wray, as she appeared in *King Kong*.





Left: Margot Kidder brought Superman's Lois Lane right up to date with her hard-nosed portrayal in the 1978 movie. Right: Another Superman lovely, Eve Teschmacher. Somehow Valerie Perrine seemed more glamorous in this role than in her earlier fantasy outing, *Slaughterhouse 5*, despite the fact that she wore more clothes in *Superman*!

companies. So, enter Ursula. Alas she only visited the fantasy screen twice since Bond, in Italy's rarely seen *The Tenth Victim* and in Hammer's *She*, though she's due back in *Clash of Titans*.

In Connery's *Bondage*, the only distinct successor of Ursula was Martine Beswick, the Jamaican firebrand who later fought Raquel to a frazzle in *One Million Years BC* and stayed in the doo-skins for more of the prehistoric Hammer movies. Martine is, remembered far more for being the result of the cocktail Ralph Bates stirred, shook and drunk in *Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde*. Bates turning into Beswick, and Martine examining the transformation in front of her mirror is



**"My choice, as a chauvinist, both male and nationalistic, is the British girl our studios let get away. Barbara Steele!"**  
**—Tony Crawley.**

something you don't forget in a hurry.

During Roger Moore's shaky stab at Bondmanship, we've had very little to write to M about. Jane Seymour has so much hair she should be in shampoo commercials. Still, she's flowering, slightly, after Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger and Chris Reeve's first post-Supie film, *Somewhere in Time*. Britt Ekland and Maud Adams were decorative drags and the less said about Lois Chiles in *Moonraker*, the better, hmm?

However, Moore's Bond did also unearth Barbara Bach, the very stuff of which fantasy images are bred. She's also sticking close to the fantastical with *The Humanoid* and other shock-horror opuses. Hidden away in *Moonraker*, though, was the girl who could outstrip — and I use the word advisedly — them all. Corrine Clery. She first made her start in the greatest French fantasy of them all, *The Story of O*. But she did well in *The Humanoid* and wants, or so she tells me, to do more. What she should do is one more Bond at least; she is the only member of the cast to have survived the gadgetry of *Moonraker*.

Helping out 007 from time to time has been the best of *The Avengers*. Where else did Goldfinger's Pussy Galore come from . . . or On Her Majesty's Secret Service's Tracy. Honor Blackman and Diana Rigg had their mark on secret service duty with Patrick MacNee. Joanna Lumley, too, though for some reason everyone tends to forget Linda Thorson. I relished her rather more than any of them, with the possible exception of Joanna's winning Purdey. But as I've expressed already, it's really horses for courses in fantasy women. No producer or director can legislate which women will work out best in what film . . . which perhaps explains Farrah Fawcett in *Saturn 3* if anything can explain Farrah Fawcett in *Saturn 3*.

Aunty BBC has always had more room for fantasy women — girls then — than t'other side. There is the never-ending supply of assistants to the similarly never-ending supply of Dr Whos — from whom,



I recall Louise Jameson, Elisabeth Sladen and Mary Tamm more easily than the rest. And there is now the increasing amount of pulchritude on galactic service with Blake's 7. Pity to see Sally Knyvette depart, though I've been enjoying Jan Chappell and Josette Simon, and feel it's about time Michael Keating's Vila went the way of Gareth Thomas and was succeeded by bird. Jacqueline Pearce's Servalan is your average enough fantasy villainess. I find it rather hard to believe in her after once sitting for a week or more on a Shepperton set when she was making a madcap comedy co-starring Jerry Lewis!

No, Josette is my favourite of the new team. She's the small screen's successor to Nichelle Nichols.

Which brings us to be current crop of the fantasy harvest. Persis Khambatta was looked after better by the make-up department than the script unit in *Star Trek — The Motion Picture*. (I still can't get over the "Motion Picture" bit; the Trades Description Act should prosecute this lame film). Yvette Mimieux was better suited for the events of *The Black Hole*. Ms Mimieux has been around since she was a memo on George Pal's pad with *The Time Machine* in mind, plus long service in various disaster and other related movies: *Skyjacked*, *The Neptune Factor* and *Disaster on the Coastliner*. Blondes, I'm told in Hollywood, are essential for the people-in-jeopardy syndrome.

As for the rest of the breed, Hammer Films supplied them all. Didn't they though? As Chris Lee and Peter Cushing took it in turns to head up a cast, the



Hammer list of fantasy women began to take on the appearance of a ceaseless production line. From Hazel Court, of the low-hung neckline, in *The Curse of Frankenstein*, to Ursula Andress as She. From Kate O'Mara, Ingrid Pitt, Caroline Munro, to the flawless blondes, Veronica Carlson, Yutte Stensgaard and the lovely Czech-mate of them all, Olinka Berova.

I must admit it helps a lot if you can get to meet some of these fantastics and I spent a most enjoyable day with Olinka when she was the Andress successor in what can only be termed as a *Shequel* in 1970.

From all these wonder women — sorry, Lynda Carter, did I forget you? How remiss of me . . . From all these ladies and so many others that I cannot mention or there'd be no room for the pictures, and they, after all, are the purpose of this feature — there has to be a No 1 Fantasy Woman. Of course, there does.

And this is where the fur starts flying. For I cannot expect you to agree with my choice. Nor would I particularly want you to.

My choice, as a chauvinist, both male and nationalistic, is the British girl our studios let get away. Barbara Steele!

Barbara, also known in some quarters as Barbaric Steele, is the pre-eminent star attraction on the fantasy genre scene, past, present and future. For me, she is without equal in the horror department of the field — *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Terror of Dr Hitchcock*, *The Spectre*, *8½*, *Castle of Blood*, *The Long Hair of Death* etc . . .



Far left: Barbara Bach made us all sit up and take notice in *The Spy Who Loved Me* though she went on to Italy's *The Humanoid*. Left: Singer Dana Gillespie turned up as Ajor in *The People Time Forgot*. Far right: Anita Pallenberg almost stole the show in *Barbarella* (1967) as The Black Queen. Above: Marisa Mell provided the glamour in Mario Bava's *Danger Diabolik* (1967). Right: Jane Fonda's first starring role was *Barbarella*, in which the title sequences caused something of a sensation.



Below: Cult horror queen Barbara Steele has appeared mainly in foreign horror offerings after being ignored by British film-makers. Her most recent film was Cronenberg's *Shivers*.



You want more? Terror Creatures from *The Grave*, *The Faceless Monster*, *An Angel for Satan*, *Revenge of the Blood Beast*, *The Curse of the Crimson Altar*, *Shivers* . . . The most Pinewood could do with her was things like the 1959 re-make of *The 39 Steps*!

Roger Corman made her a star, Italy rein forced her appeal. The French adored her. Vincent Price and Boris Karloff worked with her — so did Michael Reeves and Fellini. She generated a heady mix of high-fashioned intellectualism and voluptuous sadism, which, like her, we don't see enough of anymore. She still makes the odd film — usual for Roger Corman *Piranha* was the last.

Barbara Steele rapidly became a cult figure. She once summed up for me the dangers of being a fantasy woman, which, in the end, is another expression for being a cult, and which explained why she planned to escape into other roles. Being a cult, she said, did not put food on the table.

Once only did the international screen get close to matching the essential — and sensual — appeal of Barbara Steele. And that proved that the best fantasy woman, like the best fantasy, is not real at all, but needs to be fabricated. I refer to *The Black Queen* in Fonda-Vadim's *Barbarella*.

The face and the body belonged to Anita Pallenberg. The voice was that of Fennella Fielding. The marriage was quite sublime.

If only Caroline Munro would talk like Andress, then I'd understand what the fuss about her was all about . . .

# GERRY ANDERSON'S **THE SECRET SERVICE**

*THE SECRET SERVICE* BROKE NEW GROUND IN GERRY ANDERSON'S SERIES OF SCIENCE FICTION PUPPET SHOWS IN THE AMOUNT OF LIVE ACTION FOOTAGE USED. STARRING BOTH LIVE AND A PUPPET STANLEY UNWIN IN THE LEAD ROLE THE SERIES LASTED ONLY 13 EPISODES AND IS AMONG THE RAREST OF THE ANDERSON SHOWS.



**T**he Secret Service the story of an ordinary English country priest, Father Unwin, and his slow-thinking yokel gardener Matthew Harding. At least, to the casual observer, that's what they appear to be. In reality, they are Secret Service agents working under orders from BISHOP (British Intelligence Service Headquarters, Operation Priest). The BISHOP personnel communicate with their operatives via Father Unwin's hearing aid.

On special missions, Father Unwin and Matthew use a remarkable electronic device hidden in a book left in Unwin's care by a late parishoner. The device can miniaturise a person or object to one-third life size – thus enabling super-agent Matthew to carry out daredevil missions which would be otherwise impossible. (The crime-fighting possibilities of miniaturisation were further developed in Gerry Anderson's later, unscreened pilot *The Investigator*.) When Matthew has been miniaturised, Father



*A selection of scenes from the series, **The Secret Service**, which featured both live action and puppets and starred Stanley Unwin.*



Unwin carries him about in a specially-converted suitcase. The case has a chair and periscope so that Matthew can sit and watch the world go by. He can talk to Father Unwin through the hearing aid and has his own hearing aid for communication during missions.

This may seem a little strange. The series becomes even more outlandish when you realise that it starred both the real "live" Stanley Unwin and a Stanley Unwin puppet (made by Terry Curtis). Although live-action hands had been used for close-ups in previous Gerry Anderson series, this was the first time that the team had used full live-action mixed with puppets. It was even more complicated because miniaturisation was an integral part of the plot.



Art director Keith Wilson explained to me: "The whole series had special problems because, when he (Matthew) was small, you had to have large sets. When he was large, you had to have small sets. When he was small, he was a puppet and everything else was real. But, when he wasn't small, he was still a puppet and everything else was puppet sized." This was further complicated by the fact that, on location long-shots, the real Stanley Unwin was seen driving a real Model-T Ford; in close-ups, a puppet Unwin was seen driving a radio-controlled miniature model-T.

Gerry Anderson explains: "For example, we had sequences where the Model-T would drive – for real – into London Airport with Stanley Unwin driving. He would stop, get out and walk into this enormous (real) departure lounge and walk up to the desk. As he walked up to the desk, we would go *bang* into a close-up of the puppet and they were so cleverly matched, you couldn't



tell the difference."

Keith Wilson agrees: "It did work. In fact, it was impossible to tell the difference."

"We were able," says Gerry Anderson, "to do all sorts of things that we weren't previously able to do. Again, it was an endeavour to make the puppets appear to be walking properly."

Executive producer Reg Hill expanded on this to me: "All that happened was that, for certain areas you'd find difficult to do with puppets, we used live-action. It wasn't a question of a live-action film with puppets or puppets with live-action. It was a question of using whichever was more advantageous at the time. In other words, they were complementary. For ages before, we had been using live hands

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**"I won't pretend *The Secret Service* would have been a runaway success. But it was never given a chance" — Gerry Anderson.**

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for inserts, for the simple reason that you can't get puppets to move their hands, to twiddle knobs or poke buttons. So we'd been half the way there previously."

Keith Wilson told me he thought the basic idea was "rather good" and Gerry Anderson used the same words: "It was a rather good idea". When I talked to the show's producer, David Lane, he agreed: "I thought it was ingenious," he told me. "But it was a nightmare — an absolute nightmare, because of the different scales we were using. You can imagine the problems. You're shrinking a puppet to puppet size on a puppet set and then you're having to build it live-action size for the puppet because he's supposed to be a small man in a full-sized environment. And then you're using the 'shrunk' puppet in a normal set. I mean, it was a very, very complicated series. We had to work it out at script stage. It wasn't always the director who worked it out — we had to work it out at script stage."

And, of course, puppets are often more difficult to work with than live actors, as David Lane explains: "Everything's pre-planned in puppets. It's no good going on (stage for shooting) and saying *We'll change that line of dialogue and we'll do it this way* because you haven't got anyone there to change the line of dialogue. You're stuck with what you've pre-recorded."

The one thing the series did undeniably have, though, was charm. Gerry Anderson told me, "I thought it was one of the most charming series I've made, but then I was in love with it. It was a beautiful country church and a vicar and young Matthew who used to help out in the garden and they had their regular Sunday services. (The title *The Secret Service* is a pun.) Because it was so strongly connected with The Church, of course, we made sure that the missions were always Good against Evil."

The production notes for the series say, "Father Unwin is as conscious of his spiritual responsibilities as any other priest. If his experiences can provide him with any material for his sermons, he conveys it to his congregation in symbolic and well-disguised terms." He is described as "the sort of man who normally prefers

to wear a cassock and is old-fashioned enough to go to bed in a night-shirt and night-cap."

With such an out-of-the-ordinary series, it was felt that the music, too, should be something special. Composer Barry Gray remembers that Gerry Anderson was originally very keen to have a title song similar to the then-popular Swingle Singers style. So Barry Gray "dashed over to France and got a meeting with Ward Swingle and his agent, who (both) spoke very poor English — as bad as my poor French — and I got a (financial) quote from them which I hastily phoned through to Gerry and everything was all set. I was going to sign the thing on our company's behalf when I said to (Swingle), "Now, this is (the rights) for the world — tout le monde". And he said, "Oh! Non, non! Non! Angleterre seulement!" Only for the British Isles. And the price was (going to be) fantastic. So we had to scrap that. On the plane coming back, I just got a little theme in the style of Bach and started to write and I'd near-enough written a three-part fugue by the time I'd got to Britain. Then I got The Mike Sammes Singers and they did a very good job on it."

Barry Gray, too, enjoyed what he saw of the series: "I liked it very much, because it was a tongue-in-cheek comedy. And you had a hell of a job to tell which was live-action and which was puppet. I liked the series. There was some reason why it was only shown on ATV in the Midlands. I think there was some trouble with the other (ITV) contractors. I don't know the story."

Shane Rimmer (the voice of Scott Tracey in *Thunderbirds* and a long-time Anderson associate) wrote one of the *Secret Service* episodes. He told me he thought maybe it was a bit too bizarre. There was the small matter of Stanley Unwin's famous gobbledegook speech — Unwinese. Ironically, that is what first attracted Gerry Anderson to the project.

"I chose Stanley Unwin," he told me, "because you are not supposed to understand Stanley Unwin, even if you're British. I thought if the Americans don't understand him either what's the difference? But, once again, it was one of those things where the distributors killed the programme, not the audience. The audience might well have done — I wouldn't pretend that it would have been a runaway success. But it was never given a chance. The American distributors saw the first couple of programmes and said, Ohhhh, my gawd! and *zunk* the whole thing was killed stone dead."

Shane Rimmer says, "It was a bizarre idea. I don't know if it really worked or not. I think the talking got everyone confused. I can't understand what Stanley Unwin is saying when he's talking straight!" So how were the scripts written? "Well, a lot of it you just had to





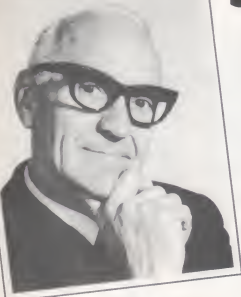


*The series involved the usual amount of Andersonesque hardware in the form of highly detailed models.*



# THE ANDERSON INTERVIEWS

## STANLEY UNWIN



Stanley Unwin is nationally famous as the inventor and chief exponent of "gobbledegook", a intelligible nonsense language. As the star of *The Secret Service* he enhanced the general air of weirdness that surrounded the show.

Stanley Unwin was born in South Africa, but has lived in Britain since he was three. He thinks he read his first of story under his desk at primary school in Cheshire. The schoolmaster caught him and young Stanley "lost an enchanting story forever". But Unwin maintained his interest in science fiction and became a Ray Bradbury enthusiast after reading part of *The Martian Chronicles*.

He studied at a school for Wireless Operation Training and then, for ten years, was a wireless engineer running his own business. In 1940, he joined the BBC as a war correspondent/sound engineer and, after D-Day, spent time with all the armed services including Petton's 3rd Army. He was the BBC technical expert chosen to go on the 1947 Royal Tour of South Africa and it was around this time that he discovered his talents for "double talk", which he turned into a party piece so successfully that he was asked to broadcast in 1948.

His "Unwinese" was actually developed by telling bedtime fairy stories to his two daughters. He told me: "I found they enjoyed the stories even more when I used double talk. I was also interested in speaking like this because I had always been intrigued by the lack of communication between people when talking to each other and I realised that they listened far more attentively if you said something strangely. Also, as I first used my treatment of language to amuse children to relieve the boredom of fairy stories often repeated, there could be a good connection with Gerry's puppet films".

I asked him why Unwinese, garbled nonsense, is so immediately understandable. "I prefer to think of it as garbled sense," he told me. "The degree of perception depends on the listener. I believe it works partly because the sounds, inflections and rhythm seem to express ideas to the listener. There are visual components too, like facial expression and occasional hand and head movements. All these are used to communicate as in normal speech. I think a lot of it's partly heredity, because my mother showed the

facility during her less serious moments. But I prefer not to get too analytical because that detracts from the imaginative side of it."

Whatever the explanation of Unwinese, his initial broadcast was a success and led on to regular radio and tv appearances in such programmes as *Beyond Our Ken*, *Does the Team Think?* and *Saturday Night on the Light*. He became so popular that, in 1960, he resigned his job as a BBC Senior Recording Engineer and, aged 49, began a full-time showbiz career. He appeared in hundreds of tv shows, in commercials, pantomime, the *Carry On* films and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Recently, he's been seen in a series of Pirelli tyre ads.

When he was approached to star in *The Secret Service*, he saw it as a challenge to do something new: "Garry Anderson has a wonderful imagination and I found that he and his team were in tune, so to speak, with my vehicle. This was something new. Why shouldn't it work? It was an attempt to add a new dimension to the puppet field and the "all-consuming" medium of films and TV surely needs encouragement in new ideas. It was a bit bizarre, but then aren't many new ideas a little odd at first?"

Unwin also had some doubts about how the series would fare in the US: "Garry Anderson is a better judge of the American comprehension of Unwinese than I am, but I certainly had misgivings because of the preponderance in their population of people of non-Anglo-Saxon origins. If we assume one-third of the American population came from the British Isles, I believe that those in cosmopolitan America would largely understand. It would be difficult to assess idiomatic appreciation across the States as a whole. The *Secret Service* never succeeded commercially. But there are some minority aspects of humour which are so strong that, in spite of their non-commerciality, they can be worthwhile. I received letters of appreciation from places like Australia, Canada and the Far East right up to last year — ten years after the series was made".





Above left: Father Unwin at the wheel of his Ford Model-T. Above right: Matthew is miniaturised by a strange device. Below: A master-spy escapes from prison with the aid of a helicopter.



**"Lew Grade said to me:  
Can you produce a show  
for £10,000 per episode,  
to which I said no." —  
Gerry Anderson**

leave to him. You have to give him a line of patter that's going to work with what he does. At that time, they wanted a lot of olde English institutional things like old churchyards and pubs and Dartmoor inns and London Bridge and you just twisted the story into that. They were totally *outlandish*. I mean, they really *were*. They were (*laughs*) very unbelievable a lot of the things. Because *he* was such a bizarre character, you felt you could really go all the way with him: you could practically do anything. But (*laughs*) I think we went a bit too far."

I asked Gerry Anderson why Lew Grade of ATV/ITC had backed such a strange concept as a series. "He did it because he trusted my judgement and I wanted to do it," Anderson told me.

When I asked art director Keith Wilson what the reaction to this strange format was among the staff at Gerry Anderson's Century 21 studios, he told me: "We had a unique set-up when we were at Slough. It really was unique. We'd do one complete series and then we'd have a holiday and go straight on to the next series. We just went from one series to another. So, when it came to a series like that, it was just an extension (of what we'd done before). This was just another idea that Gerry and Sylvia had thought up. How are we going to do this one? You're in that way of thinking anyway — you're used to it. But *The Secret Service*, I think, (*laughs*) did take a *little* longer to grasp."

I asked producer David Lane if the series was only supposed to run thirteen episodes or if it had been cancelled in mid-shoot. He told me he had never been given a specific series length in advance. "Basically," he said, "the studio was going to close down anyway. The produce had got beyond its cost. There is a certain value which that kind of production has. Once it gets beyond that, (TV companies) might as well buy something else. Overheads were very heavy (*there were about 200 people working at the Slough studios*). I can't remember what the programmes were costing towards the end, but it was something like £20,000 which was a lot of money for a half-hour children's show at that time (1969). I know Lew (Grade) always wanted, really, to produce a show for £10,000. He did say to me once, *Can you produce me a show for £10,000?* to which I said no. Not the way the system was set up at Century 21. It wasn't possible."

# BOOK WORLD



## FOUR PORTFOLIOS

from *Paper Tiger/Dragon's World*

Throughout most of the 1970s portfolios and prints have been an established part of the fantasy scene in America. In the main they have been produced by either fan or small publishers although the work featured is, more often than not, by the more popular fantasy or strip artists. In the past most of portfolios — Frank

Frazetta's *Lord of the Rings*, Bemi Wrightson's *Frankenstein* et al — have been limited editions; it is only recently that long print run 'folios' have become available over there.

As usual with this type of material, specialist dealers have brought copies into the UK but normally only very few of each end, partly because they have had only limited exposure, they have not been that well accepted.

Now *Paper Tiger/Dragon's World* are changing all that. They have put together

portfolios by Achilleos, Philip Castle, Dean and Mouse & Kelley and, with the aid of Phin Publishing (the distributors), they intend to have them distributed as widely as possible.

Each portfolio is presented in a full colour slipcase with one of the eight prints reproduced on the front and small reproductions of all eight on the back. All four have an excellent visual impact that suggests (correctly) a quality product. With each slipcase comes a biography of the artist(s) printed in brown on a cream vellum, the same size as the prints — 16 x 12". The prints themselves are in full colour and are on a high quality artboard to enhance the reproduction.

It is likely that only the work of Messrs Achilleos and Deen is familiar to Starburst readers so I will discuss their 'folios' first.

The Chris Achilleos selection is entitled *Amazons* and features 8 rather erotic warrior

women. Of the total 5 were the covers to the *Raven* series of sword and sorcery books and the other 3 are completely new. These latter three are probably the best of the set and feature *The Redskin*, *Maasai* and (my favourite and cover of the slipcase) *Jungle Girl*. All eight are very good examples of Mr Achilleos' work at its best but the *Raven* covers could have been improved on.

Simply titled Roger Dean, his set is comprised entirely of material that has previously been published elsewhere — 5 in *Views* and the other three in *The Flights of Icarus* (the cover of that book is one of the three). Obviously this must be a disappointment to any of his followers looking for new material but, nevertheless, the set is representative of his output.

Of the four portfolios I only have qualms about the reproduction in Roger Dean's. For some reason a number of the prints have a







greiny look about them that detracts from the artwork. Certainly I have seen them reproduced better elsewhere – the difference between the poster of *Greenslade Sea* and the print included here is especially noticeable.

Of the remaining two sets *Castle* by Philip Castle is the nearest to “fantasy” as we would interpret it. I understand that it is proving the most popular of the four although the reason why that should be is beyond me. I have mentioned the point to various acquaintances all of whom say, “I can see why!” but are never able to explain their reasons.

Mr Castle’s style is basically (in the prints presented here) a combining of well-known personalities with some aspect of auto or aircraft engineering. Thus we have Farrah Fawcett (Majors) with jet engine intakes where her bust should be (that one is called “Truly Trionic”), “One Piece at a Time” featuring

Johnny Cash playing a guitar-like car wing and the Queen disguised as R2D2 with C3PO/Prince Philip in attendance (they are both “constructed” from engine parts and the print has “My Force and I” as its title). All eight prints are technically very well executed but, for the life of me, I cannot see their appeal.

Finally, we come to the strangest of the four sets “Mouse & Kelley”. Stanley Mouse and Alton Kelley are two American artists who made their name designing rock concert posters in San Francisco during the late 1960s and have subsequently established themselves as album cover artists working for such groups as the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane. This portfolio is made up of a selection of their recent concert posters and album covers. Again the artistry is excellent but I feel that the market for this type of material is even more limited than I thought the one for the Philip

Castle set would have been. Interestingly, the Mouse & Kelley ‘folio is the only one of the four to have something other than a reproduction of one of the prints from the set as the front cover of the slipcase. All four sets are worth checking out, they each have their merits.

In closing a word of warning – each of the slipcases is held closed by a tab extending from the front cover into a slot on the back. It’s difficult to get open and as bad (if not worse) to close. My advice is to ignore it once you get it open end to hope, as I do, that any future releases will not include this abominable feature.

*Published by Paper Tiger/Dragon’s World  
Includes 8 prints 12 x 16” £5.95 each.*

**Review by Alex Carpenter**

**T**he Outer Limits was born on September 16, 1963 via the ABC-TV network (USA), with the episode, *The Galaxy Being*.

The series' concept had come from the creative mind of Leslie Stevens; writer, producer and director of such tv hits as *Stoney Burke*, *The Virginian* and, later, *It Takes a Thief*. At the time, Stevens was executive producer on the *Daystar Stoney Burke* rodeo series for ABC, which he had created, written and was also directing.

With what appeared to be a "Horror-Monster" boom during the beginning of the Sixties, everyone wanted a piece of the action. American International Pictures were producing their series of Roger/Edgar Allan Poe films with Vincent Price; Hammer Films were hotly pursuing their own colourful gothic features; various publications devoted to fantasy films were crowding the magazine racks . . . and tv was contributing to the "Monster" market with a few memorable items such as *The Twilight Zone* and the Boris Karloff-hosted Thriller series.

Stevens conceived a project tentatively entitled *Please Stand By* and approached ABC-TV with a proposition for a new science fiction anthology series. The net-

work approved the idea and, in early 1963, Stevens wrote the pilot script and was set to direct it. However he found his time was taken up by *Stoney Burke* so he called in his old friend Joseph Stefano to produce and co-own the series, along with United Artists.

Stefano, a writer-producer whose most famous screenplay credit must be Hitchcock's *Psycho*, produced the pilot show (his debut as a producer) with Stevens directing. The pilot was shown to network executives in New York, who were delighted with it, and Villa di Stefano-Daystar-United Artists Productions were in business.

In March of '63, Stefano hired writer Louis Morheim for the post of story consultant on *Please Stand By*. Morheim was set to contribute several scripts to the series in addition to functioning as story consultant. During this time the pilot show was being screened to writers and writers' agents — a somewhat uncommon

"There is nothing wrong with your television set. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. WE are controlling transmission. If we wish to make it louder, we will bring up the volume. If we wish to make it softer, we will tune it to a whisper. WE will control the horizontal. WE will control the vertical. We can roll the image, make it flutter. We can change the focus to a soft blur or sharpen it to crystal clarity. For the next hour, sit quietly and we will control all that you see and hear. We repeat, there is nothing wrong with your television set. YOU are about to participate in a great adventure. YOU are about to experience the awe and mystery which reaches from the inner mind to . . ."

# THE OUTER





practice at this time — to familiarize potential contributors with what the producers were looking for, by way of style and overall theme.

Along with the screening writers and agents received a "canon" (a guide for prospective contributors) which detailed the fundamental requirements per episode: "Each play must have a Bear. The Bear is that one splendid, staggering, shuddering effect that induces awe or wonder or tolerable terror, or even merely conversation and argument." The "Bear" that Stefano's outline refers to is the Monster, be it alien or semi-human. The idea of the Bear was that "the viewer will follow and care about and at times even identify with a 'monster' or an embodied 'element' or a strange and unworldly 'creature'."

In April the show was retitled *Beyond Control*. However, when the series actually went into production, on May 22, 1963 (shooting at the KTTV and

MGM lots and stages), the show came under the new title of *The Outer Limits*. Also, about this time, veteran cinematographer and director Byron Haskin, who for eight years had been director of special effects at Warners, was signed by Daystar to create and supervise a special effects department. It is not clear what exactly happened to Haskin's effects department, because a visual effects company called Project Unlimited was also involved with the series from the time of the pilot show.

Among the special effects team that made up the crew of Project Unlimited was stop-motion animator Jim Danforth. Aiong with Paul LeBaron and Robert Rodine, Danforth's name appears on the *Outer Limits* credits for Special Photographic Effects but his personal contribution was minimal. "The one I animated I don't remember the title of," Danforth has commented. "But it involved a big, ambulatory plant that got loose on a spaceship." This particular episode was *Counter-weight*, and was first telecast on December 26, 1964.

"Then I worked on one the second season about the Martian sand-sea *The Invisible Enemy*. We just got scenes to work on, we didn't get scripts. At the

# LIMITS

A special television retrospective by regular *Starburst* contributor Tise Vahimagi



Below: Jim Danforth's "Bear" for the episode Counterweight. Right: The episode The Human Factor contained no real monster. This scene depicts the creature Harry Guardino imagines is haunting him.



time we didn't even know what we were doing. They just told us they needed a scene of such and such and we'd give it to them. But I did a little bit of glass painting work on the sand — repainting stuff that existed in miniature just because you couldn't hold it in focus as it came into the lens; it'd go out of focus. We'd paint on a flat, vertical plane. Beyond that we had a rubber swimming pool filled with water with cork floating on top. There was a man underwater in a skin-diving suit puppeting the head of the monster around. He had earphones on so he could hear what to do — kind of an interesting idea. I didn't really work that much on Outer Limits."

On Monday, September 16, at 7:30 in the evening, *The Galaxy Being* premiered The Outer Limits on American television. This episode was the original Leslie Stevens pilot and starred Cliff Robertson, Jacqueline Scott, Lee Phillips and William O. Douglas Jr as the "Bear."

The episode told the story of a man (Robertson) who operates an independent radio station and, while experimenting with a 3-D scanner device,



accidentally makes contact with an alien from the Andromeda Galaxy. The alien, through another accidental turn of events, is transported to Earth and begins to wreak havoc, due to powerful electromagnetic waves emanating from its body. Finally, the military arrive and after the alien denounces aggressive human behaviour it voluntarily disintegrates.

This first episode didn't scale any new heights of sf exploration or offer fabulous visions of unlimited imagination — in fact, it just presented the formula plot of alien encounter. However, the element that elevated this story — and most of the Outer Limits stories that were to follow — was deeply rooted in the Rod Serling mould of "it's not *what* you say, it's the

way you say it."

Leslie Stevens' teleplay took a stock situation and made it a thought-provoking piece of imaginative drama that added dimension to the characters and a certain degree of "realism" to the fantastic events. It was that certain something that made the human characters believable and the alien acceptable — a special, carefully-controlled quality that only occasionally surfaces in movies and rarely in tv drama. The episode was, in effect, wholly representative of the show's general format (naturally, being the pilot): it emphasised the reversal of clichéd roles — now revealing the human element as invariably greedy and barbarous while the horrendous-looking





alien creature turned out to be more understanding and compassionate.

Further insight to the general theme of *The Outer Limits* was conveyed in a part of the spoken epilogue: "We must see the stranger in a new light — the light of understanding."

The tv reviewer for the industry journal *The Hollywood Reporter* accepted *The Galaxy Being* with more than a measure of enthusiasm: "Creator Leslie Stevens, tripling on this science-fiction debut as exec producer, writer and director, allowed his imagination to run wild to the point of incredulity in the initial plot, but the production was mounted so handsomely with special effects, smoothly accelerated suspense

and acting played straight down the middle for human values rarely given more fleeting development in shock themers, that this viewer's reaction at the finish was: it couldn't possibly happen, but I wouldn't bet heavily that it couldn't.

"Good acting by Robertson was abetted in fair measure by Jacqueline Scott as his neglected wife, Lee Phillips as his brother and Allyson Ames as the brother's sexy sweetie. Producer Joe Stefano gave the chiller dimension with a full attack on the creature by not one but several siren-screaming squad cars and a National Guard platoon whose fusillades couldn't dent the invincible creature. Of important note were the commendably

Left: David McCallum and Jill Heworth in James Goldstone's *The Sixth Finger*. Below: Cliff Robertson as the radio operator who contacts *The Galaxy Being*. Bottom: Phyllis Love as one of the victims of a Feasibility Study.



creative camera effects by M.B. Paul."

The unique universe of *The Outer Limits* contains, from an overall view, two distinctive styles: the first, under producer Stefano, explored and related science in terms of gothic horror; the second, under producer Ben Brady, emerged as cold, calculated science fiction. In short, the show's first season produced a dark, almost gothic world of nightmarish creatures populating a science fiction landscape (as in *The Architects of Fear*, *Nightmare, It Crawled Out of the Woodwork*, *The Zanti Misfits*, *The Invisibles*, etc), while the second season was primarily structured around scientific concepts and formulae (*Soldier*, *Demon With a Glass Hand*, *I, Robot*, *Keeper of the Purple Twilight*, etc).

It is, however, Stefano's *Outer Limits* style that remains the most impressive, and most memorable. At the summit of the show's greatest achievements, the episodes penned by Joe Stefano and, usually, directed by Gerd Oswald remain as the true hallmarks of *Outer Limits* genius.

Before discussing and examining the

## THE OUTER LIMITS

Stefano-Oswald collaborations, a look at Stefano's other works in the series (all first season entries) would be in order.

The first real sign of things to come was seen in *Nightmare*, a most apt title for the Stefano theme. Stefano assigned John Erman (recently active in *Roots* — *The Next Generations*), then a production assistant at Daystar, to direct the producer's story — originally called "Ebon Struck First" — about the pain and torture six human POWs undergo following a war between Earth and a mysterious planet called Ebon. Taking place on the shadowy planet Ebon, most of the scenes are enshrouded in darkness, establishing a grim, cold world where the alien guards use strange rods to inflict pain (one man is blinded, another has the bones in his arm shattered) and cause hallucinations. This claustrophobic world of light and shadow, superbly photographed by John M. Nickolaus, is reminiscent in mood of the German Expressionist cinema of the 1920s, and serves to draw the desperation of the men to a frightening conclusion.

Probably the most familiar, easily recognised of Outer Limits "monsters" are the alien creatures in *The Zanti Misfits*. The Zanti are small, insect-like creatures with cruel, grotesque visages. Penned by Stefano, *The Zanti Misfits* is a creepy version of Earth's first alien encounter: under threat of attack from the planet Zanti, Earth is forced to prepare a special penal colony for a party of Zanti criminals; the setting is an isolated desert, with the military monitoring the arrival from a nearby ghost town; during the course of (unexpected) events the Zanti attempt an escape in their small craft but land on the military observation post; a horrifying battle ensues, with dozens of aliens scurrying over the building, dropping down and paralyzing the human defenders; the humans win the battle but now await the great onslaught from the planet Zanti.

A superb piece of creepy tv action-drama, *The Zanti Misfits* takes the viewer into a different realm of aggressive alien form and behaviours. The aliens, unlike most others seen in the series, are small, beetle-like beings with near-human faces and scuttle rapidly around like demented spiders. The final, pitched battle comes across, in effect, as a microcosm of interplanetary warfare; director Leonard Horn visualises a desolate world where man meets an unknown aggressor and expects the worst to follow.

This was the second of three Outer Limits episodes directed by Horn, and it stands as a bizarre departure from his other two stories: *The Man Who Was Never Born* and *Children of Spider*

*County* are both sensitive and emotional, weaving something of a poetic relationship between the "alien" figures and the humans.

The animated Zanti models were designed and created by Wah Chang, with Al Hamm handling the stop-motion effects.

Stefano's *The Belleró Shield*, under the direction of veteran John Brahm, revealed another form of alien contact. An alien composed of solidified light appears in the laboratory of a struggling scientist/inventor, where the scientist's wife kills it and takes its force-field control. In an attempt to help her husband succeed she demonstrates the force shield but becomes trapped inside it. The alien, however, is not dead and reclaims its property, leaving the ambitious woman completely insane, believing that she is forever trapped inside the force-field.

*The Belleró Shield* is in some ways similar to another Stefano (co-written with Louis Morheim) story, *Moonstone*. The latter segment also confronts humans with essentially benign alien forms, and again it is the humans who attract trouble

— either out of suspicion, greed or simple human error.

Another Stefano script, *A Feasibility Study*, directed by Byron Haskin this time, involves a vast kidnapping by aliens — the removing of an entire section of a city to an alien planet. The purpose is to use the humans for breeding, to continue the aliens' dying race. The first part of this episode is quite interesting: a man (*Sam Wanamaker*) goes through the daily routine of leaving his house and driving off to work; however, when he gets to the end of his street he encounters a barren landscape of rocks and sand enshrouded in fog. Later, from out of this fog come the grotesque aliens, and what was once sane reality becomes an incredible fantasy.

This, then, is the Stefano world of nightmares — that man drives from everyday life into a living nightmare. The "landscape," to be sure, is science fiction (albeit a crude form) but the "world" is sheer horror, in its gloomiest sense. ●

Next issue: *Tise Vahimagi* continues his look at this classic television series in *The Outer Limits* — Part II.

Right: Buck Taylor and Melinda Plowman in Don't Open Till Doomsday.  
Inset: Martin Landau as the creature in The Man Who Was Never Born.



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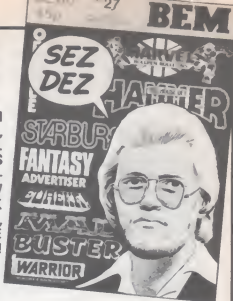
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# THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM  
DEPARTING EDITOR, DEZ SKINN,  
TO ALL STARBURST READERS.  
AND FOR ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FOLLOWED DEZ'S PROGRESS  
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IT AWAY, DEZ!



From Eureka... to Warrior... to Spooky Stories... to Monster Mag... to House of Hammer... to MAD... to Starburst... to Marvel Comics!

You could say I've been producing fantasy magazines for quite a while now. For fandom, IPC, Top Sellers, my own company (!) and now Marvel Comics.

But not single-handed! Over that timespan, an ongoing team has gathered together. People who came in along the way, on one magazine or another, and stayed. So, like all good fantasy stories, there came a happy ending for the wandering tribe. Marvel Comics took over the publishing of Starburst, and it grew. From a bi-monthly to a monthly publication, from 48 to 56 pages.

Yet, just as Starburst has grown... so has Marvel! In fact, Marvel UK is now publishing over a thousand pages per month!

I've (somehow) tried to edit the lot!

But, to allow the expansion to continue realistically, with a sniff and a tear, I've decided to hand over the editorial reins and full control to my long-time associate editor Alan McKenzie (who's helped me muddle my way through MAD, House of Hammer and Starburst for the last two or three years).

So you're in good hands, Alan's been virtually editing the last few issues by himself anyway, as diverse projects and problems have continually pulled me away from Starburst.

As for what I'm going to be up to, well you can be sure that with Tony Crawley writing Things to Come you'll be the first to hear about them!

Best wishes,

Dez Skinn

*Dez Skinn*

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# THE THING ON TV

**M**arvel's The Thing has escaped — and who could stop him! — from The Fantastic Four tv animation series. He's vaulted into his own slot with thirteen half-hours . . . or a collection of 26 11-minute shows.

The Hanna-Barbera Thing is a long way from Stan Lee's, though. William Hanna and Joseph Barbera have pulled a fast one on the old rockman. They've turned him into a scrawny, little teenage kid. Oh, he's brainy, too, I'll grant you that. But "Benjy" Grimm . . . That's worse than turning The Incredible Hulk into pint-sized David Banner instead of the taller Bruce. It lacks the tradition and credibility of the official version.

For instance, didn't I hear somewhere Stan Lee himself confessing that one of his many pet peeves had always been the young teenage sidekicks of comic-strip superheroes. Yes, indeed I did. Origins of Marvel Comics 1974. And Stan the Man said some more on the same theme, to wit: "If yours truly were a superhero, there's no way I'd pal around with some freckle-faced teenager. At the very least, people would start to talk."

Well, in defence of the old firm of Hanna-Barbera, I suppose one should point out that Benjy is not quite The Thing's sidekick. He *is* The Thing. His alter-ego. His humanoid form. Even so, turning black Ben Grimm into Benjy is a bit too close to that which Stan Lee cannot abide.

But money talks!

Besides, the tv series is aimed at the younger audience more than at Marvel fans. And if the kids around the globe turn on to the tv version, they'll start buying the comics as well, and get the real thing . . . once they grow up to a ripe enough age to really appreciate them!

Originally part of The Fantastic Four show from Taft — H-B International, run by London Weekend over here a couple of years ago, The Thing has our handsome test pilot Ben Grimm still being accidentally turned into a phenomenally strong, monstrous man of orange clay. The change is still caused by the same overdose of cosmic radiation in space that turned his fellow travellers Dr Reed Richards into Mister Fantastic, Susan Storm into The Invisible Girl, her brother Johnny into The Human Torch and the ever abrasive Ben into, well . . . "I ain't Ben anymore. I'm what Susan called me . . . The Thing!"

Unlike the ever-wandering David Banner, known in the US as The Green-Eyed Son of The Fugitive, Ben manages



to find a medical man who can assist him with his transference problem, and change the life he seems doomed to live out as this awesomely ugly of all uglies.

Dr Harkness (no relation to Agatha in the comic version) is a high-school teacher. Subject: science, of course. Meeting The Thing, he figures that a dose of negative radiation, purely medicinal of course, can turn old stone chops back into a normal human being.

Old Thingie is only too willing to give it a go. Why, he'd even sacrifice his strength of ten men to look normal again. (Vain fellow!) Dr Harkness fixes up his bizarre device and hey presto . . . the experiment works. Kind of . . .

Instead of Ben, though, there stands thin, gangling Benjy Grimm. The radiation has regressed his human form to an earlier stage in life, back to his days as an insecure but bright schoolboy.

Good job Dr Harkness stopped the experiment when he did, otherwise we'd be into a Watch With Mother cartoon show here about some super-toddler. Although when you look at The Thing, his pants do rather resemble nappies . . .

Furthermore, the Harkness theory does not, however, stop The Thing re-emerging every now and then. Or when young Benjy utters his own with its version of the *Shazam!* cry of yore. "I'm doing my thing!" And bingo, he literally is . . .

"Once he takes on the form of the

mighty superhero," says producer Alex Lovy, "there is a time limit as to how long he will remain The Thing. He, therefore, must plan his change so that he can be The Thing and return to normal without being discovered." Ah!

Well, of course, he's not the first super-hero to face that little problem. Though it's perhaps less fun for our new form Thing than for most of his colleagues in superhero-dom. I mean, poor Ben-cum-Benjy has a tough time of it. How would you like to be a crack test pilot who now has trouble in learning to ride a bike all over again? Or be the mighty Thing and about to round up a gang of no-good crooks, when splat! — It's suddenly time to be weedy young Benjy again?

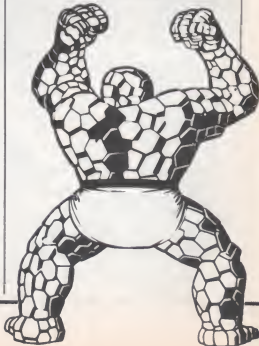
That's not all.

"Benjy faces double trouble as he struggles through his teenage years for the second time," points out Alex Lovy.

"He's grappling with bullies, suffering through crushes and struggles with his now limited powers as the awesome Thing," sympathises Lovy. "He still must also live the life of a superhero yet fit in with a bunch of crazy teenagers cutting up with their high school friends and teacher."

Benjy has some advantages with the new split in his personality. He's far less of an ogre in his street persona. For instance, Benjy is too sweet to be such a grouch like the Ben he is to grow to be.

He has girl problems, though. On both fronts. Dr Harkness has two daughters. Kelly, all of 14 going on 35, knows Benjy's secret and likes him — both of him — very much. Her sister Betty, 16



ONE OF MARVEL COMICS' BEST-SELLING TITLES, THE FANTASTIC FOUR DEBUTED IN 1961. SINCE THEN THEY HAVE STARRED IN TWO ANIMATED CARTOON SERIES. RECENTLY, A NEW CARTOON SERIES TO SOLO-STAR THEIR STRONGEST MEMBER, THE THING, WAS ANNOUNCED BY HANNA-BARBERA. WE PRESENT THE FULL STORY FROM TONY CRAWLEY.



On this page: A selection of scenes from the forthcoming Hanna-Barbera cartoon series, *The Thing*.



and going on 12, goes more for The Thing for the simple, groupie reason that he's famous. She loves to be seen around with him — and couldn't spare a second thought — or indeed a second — for Benjy, despite his terrible crush on her.

They all go to the same high-school as yet another youngster — Ronald Radford, rich and full in the mouth. He shares the same flashy interests as the mindless Betty, is mildly friendly with Benjy and prone to boasting that anything The Thing can do, he could do better. Once The Thing turns up beside him, however, Radford keeps his lip buttoned.

Radford puts Benjy on quite a bit; humorously, though. Not so Spike and the rest of The Yancy Street Gang. They love to torment the bookish kid. He manages to get his own back naturally. With a quick cry of "I'm doing my thing!" he becomes The Thing and deals

with the bullies.

Life may not be beautiful or easy, or even particularly Marvel-ous for Benjy and The Thing. But, you've guessed it, they manage to come out on top in every one of these thirteen half-hours.

Joe Baker supplies the voice of The Thing in the series, with Wayne Morton as Benjy. Noelle North is Kelly, John Erwin plays Ronald and Art Metrano supplies Spike's jibes. The rest of the regular cast, Betty, Dr Harkness, Miss Twilly and gang members Turkey and Stretch are voiced-over by Marilyn Schreffler, Michael and John Stephenson.

Personally, I'd prefer a live-action movie version, sending Benjy back to his acned oblivion and restoring Ben Grimm to us. Starring who? Well, there is only one actor for The Thing. Old Stoneface himself — Charles Bronson. Start dealing, Stan!



The full story behind the special effects on Blake's 7. See page 23.

